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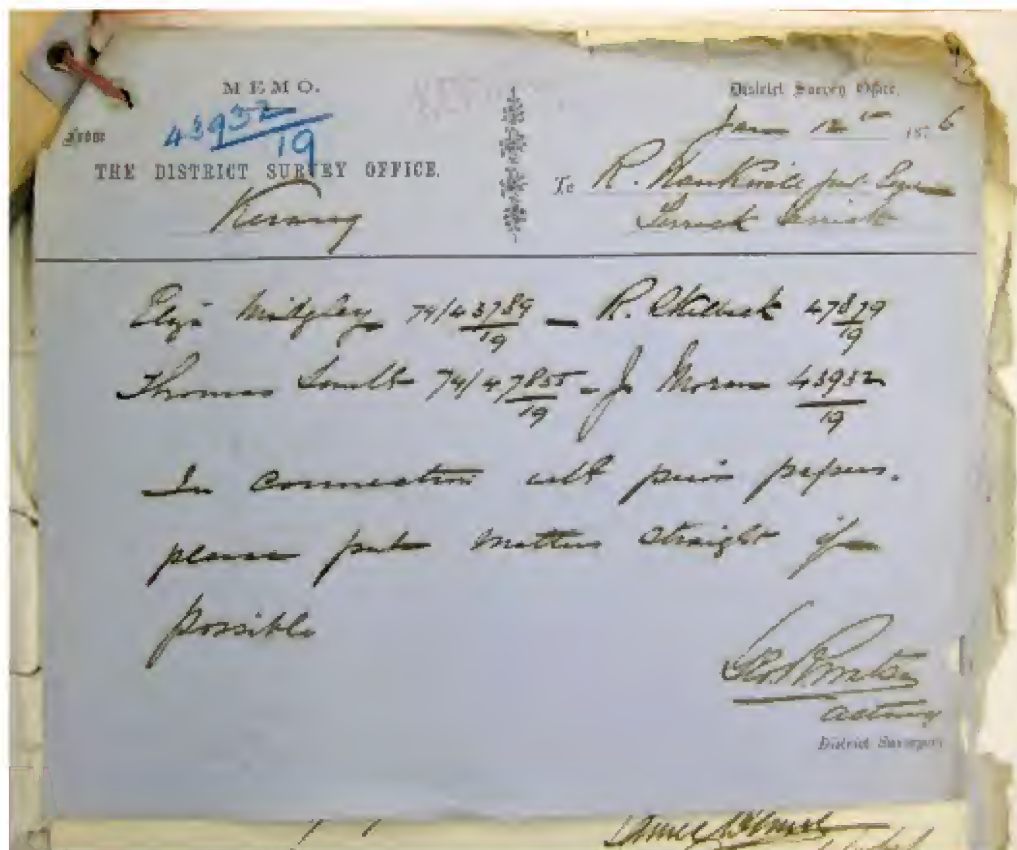
Garden history
The digital revolution
How and why

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Cover: For time-poor reader, this word cloud summarises the text of our four leading articles in this issue of *Australian Garden History*, a technique made possible with advances in digital technology and graphic design, and as effortless as if one was just blowing leaves around on the page.

Right: 'Please put matters straight if possible': what a timeless call this is! Digitisation and archives feature prominently in this issue (rendered in this land selection document via a digital image taken with an inexpensive camera, a privilege which has revolutionised copying in liberal-minded archives and libraries).

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Looking back: looking forward

Richard Aitken &
Christina Dyson

know these days in which universe one is traveling. Tablet or tweet, webinar or wiki—digitisation and its many platforms offer a Faustian compact. Increasingly relegated to one extreme is the deep comfort of traditional sources: handling historic photographs, unrolling printed maps and plans, thumbing through books and journals, the discreet charm of a site visit. None of this is obsolete—all praise and glory to its delights. Yet there is no denying that digitisation has been and continues to be a big plus for garden history. Inexorably and now with frighteningly increasing speed we have greatly enhanced access to texts, images, documents, aerial photographs, maps, plans, video, and sound. From the comfort of office or boudoir we can zoom into inaccessible sites, plot path layouts, discern tree coverage, all the while simultaneously accessing historic images and plans, and sharing discoveries globally and instantaneously.

Can there be downsides to this plethora of digitised sources and platforms? Certainly with proliferation discrimination is increasingly required; contextual knowledge often outside the experience of the user. Care is needed not only with selection, but also verification. The digital onslaught can sometimes be almost overwhelming—sometimes there is too much material available. And yet think about how far we've come in only a few decades since the days of hand-written index cards, with advent of word processing, the internet, and now the interactivity of Web 2.0.

And if we look beyond the mechanistic aspects of digitisation, there is also great potential for creative uses: crowd sourcing, mixing content from different media on a single platform (for instance images, plans, text, real-time commentary). The online community is also a very gregarious one, and although often painted as viral or destructive, in our chosen field it is almost universally cooperative and generous. Think about the remarkable success of the National Library of Australia's digitised newspaper service, where wiki-style interaction (enabled by Web 2.0 technology) has permitted millions of lines of historic newspaper texts to be accurately transcribed by enthusiastic and knowledgeable online respondents. Nowhere else in the world has such a similar crowd-sourced historic project been accomplished with such little fuss and with such great success. Perhaps this also says something about the Australian online community and its generosity of spirit.

There is great potential for a Society such as ours to engage with this online community, harnessing its enthusiasm and collective knowledge. And as a means of attracting and engaging with a younger demographic, it is one we should and must embrace with gusto.

Welcome to the real world. Or, is that the virtual world? Or perhaps the viral world. Even for the ostensibly secure orbit of garden historians, it's sometimes hard to

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Roslyn Burge

The Australian Garden History Society Oral History Project

If you know any interesting garden people—designers, gardeners, nurserymen, owners, botanists—try to get them to record their experiences, memories etc.

(Oline Richards, *Journal of the Australian Garden History*, 2, Winter 1981, p.12)

The Australian Garden History Society was newly established when Oline Richards first recommended that an oral history project be undertaken. This was a particularly early initiative not only for the Society but also within the field of oral history. The Oral History Association of Australia had been formed only in 1978 and in the three-and-a-half decades since there has been a marked shift in the practice of oral history, in the understanding of its subjectivity, and the academic and public recognition of its significance as a primary source.

It was not until 2001, with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Society approaching in 2005, that the AGHS National Management Committee initiated a national Oral History Project to record individuals' recollections of the formation and early days of the Society. Twenty interviews have been recorded representing each state and the ACT. State branches were also encouraged to record interviews, although so far only the Sydney and Northern NSW Branch has actively developed a collection of interviews with people significant in the establishment and development of the Branch, others who were influential in gardening in New South Wales, and those now in mid-career.

Represented across these interviews are the recollections of academics and bureaucrats, garden owners and gardeners, an accountant and a librarian, heritage consultants and writers,

echoing the diversity of those present at the first meeting of the Society. Richard Aitken, possibly the youngest person attending that day in 1980, remembered the 'optimism at the time ... academics were talking to bureaucrats who were talking to garden owners'. Another foundation member and Treasurer, Alethea Russell, responded emphatically to the discussion which hastened her involvement:

I was determined the voice of the amateur that wanted to keep their garden the way they liked it ... that there would be one of those people in the committee, so that's why I accepted ... I do remember an awful lot of professionals got up saying what should happen and I was squirming in my seat thinking, no, they'll take out the path I put there or they'll do something wrong. We must have a voice!

I relished Alethea Russell's recollections about growing up in a beautiful garden, the emphasis she placed on the practical difficulties of managing a garden, and her determination that the voice of the 'amateur' should not be lost among the experts' views of historic gardens.

The transcripts are marvelous—but it's the rhythm of the voice that I have the luxury of hearing as I read all these transcripts. It's a reminder that the benefit of this extended project lies in the ability to read the transcripts and hear the vocal emphasis augmenting attitudes and recollections.

Such voices share much more than the Society's beginnings, its conferences, and publications; of hurdles overcome; and of the stories of people who have supported the Society through the years. Through their reflections on the influences of childhood or family which engendered an interest in gardens, the impact of changing social and political environments of the 1970s, and the networking and informal mentoring which encouraged scholarship and research in the Society, interviewees have contributed extensive memories to a collection which is a rich resource for scholars.

All but one of the interviews has been transcribed. But written transcripts are not *oral* history and as a visual source they can never replace (or adequately replicate) the sound and aural quality of oral sources. 'Oral sources are *oral* sources', according to Alessandro Portelli in *The Oral History Reader* (1998); 'it is imperative to *listen* to the voice, to hear the silences and laughter, the tone and rhythm as individuals' memories are recalled and experiences articulated'.

Two oft-repeated threads among interviewees' recall of the Society's genesis are the pivotal role Peter Watts played in bringing the Society to fruition, and the significant, supportive role of the Patrons, each with their modest and insightful strengths.

Peter Watts was working at the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) in the 1970s when the Trust secured funding for a state-wide survey of historic gardens, which Peter undertook over two years. The Australian Heritage Commission supported the project nationally and Dame Elisabeth Murdoch remembered the influence of the AHC Chair, Professor David Yencken, 'as a tremendous force' in encouraging the Society. Everyone who prepared garden studies regularly met to share information and Peter Watts was at one of those meetings, in Launceston, when Phyl Simons concluded 'Well I think ... when all of our work comes to an end we should think about continuing it'. 'David Yencken was *very* keen that it should continue in such a way, not just be studies that sit on a shelf', Peter recalled, 'he was very clever in thinking that there needs to be a mechanism for the continuity of the work that was being done, to move it forward, and Phyl suggested that maybe we should have something like the Garden History Society in Britain'.

Mostly women have chaired the Society, each of whom brought extraordinary skills and networks to the role. Dame Elisabeth Murdoch was the first chair: Richard Aitken remains impressed by the effort she gave to unremarkable administrative tasks such as addressing '80 or 90 envelopes and letters [by hand, encouraging people to join the Society] ... she was a real doer ... I see her role sort of as something of a catalyst.' (He still has that envelope!)

Dame Elizabeth's interest in historic houses and gardens, and 'because she is such a dynamic and wonderful person and such a good gardener', combined to make her 'the natural person to ask to chair the Society', according to Peter Watts. Dame Elisabeth's energy was keenly reflected in the vitality with which Peter recalled her role as Chair:

she did that with enormous rigour ... she would have been 75 when we started off the Society and she attended the meetings and ... was a brilliant Chairwoman ... she chaired meetings very precisely and carefully and briefly and ... was also ... financially generous, [and] when the Society was getting going she ... enabled things to happen by funding them in the quietest,

most modest way. She brought her network to play ... She was very good at getting political, financial, and other support. She knew many people who were players in the Society in the early days and I think she got the thing going and when she thought she'd got it going—she must have been there two or three years—she said, 'Well I've got it going, you know, I've done my work ... you need to find someone else – I'm off.' And that's exactly what she did!

Interviewed in 2002, Dame Elisabeth remembered that the 'aims and objectives [of the Society were] so much bigger' than individual interests. Admiring of the success of the Society which has travelled 'far beyond my expectations', she said modestly, 'I'm very proud of having had only just the very early association with it'.

Howard Tanner succeeded Dame Elisabeth as Chair in 1981. With James Broadbent and Trevor Allen, his university study of colonial gardens and later the travelling exhibition, *Converting the Wilderness: the art of gardening in colonial Australia*, were part of a shifting awareness in Australia in the 1970s of heritage and gardens. Howard recalled that decade of political change, and the reach of the newly formed Society:

Whitlam felt it was time for us to become Australians: we'd been insular, provincial and a new whole mood was present. Elisabeth Murdoch put in 'seed' money so that we could have a magazine and ... early research papers like the ... *Conservation Plans for Gardens* booklet and also so that every member of the committee could come to at least one conference and one meeting a year ... so we all got to know each other, and we got to interface, and we'd have telephone hook-ups But the fact that you knew that you could get to the national conference, and possibly one other meeting

of the committee each year, really did lock things together. And I think we would have lost Perth and Brisbane along the way if we hadn't had that.

In that era of slower technology the financial support for in-person meetings was a considerable gift and discrete philanthropic gestures of Patrons have repeatedly assisted the Society.

It wasn't until after I came to Canberra and after I met Richard Clough and met some people at the [Australian] Garden History Society that I began to realise, of course, that I wasn't in a vacuum.
(Victor Crittenden, 2010)

However, it has not all been smooth sailing. Jocelyn Mitchell was Chair at a difficult period and Peter Watts believed she 'was brilliant, absolutely brilliant and I have the most enormous respect for her because she steered the Society ... with enormous integrity ... She made the hard decisions and then moved out and she got the Society back on track again and then just was at arm's length.'

During tight financial times, Robin Lewarne (as National Treasurer) and Lester Tropman, both from Sydney, sat on the NMC together. Lester recalled Robin

spent a lot of time making sure [the Society] got through that difficult period and grew out of the shackles of financial problems and ... with Jackie Courmadias [began] pre- and post-conference tours ... Robin was constantly looking for areas to make money. Not in an aggressive way but just to keep things ticking along so that it didn't stagnate—it kept moving forward with an income coming into the place to support the secretariat.

Robin Lewarne and Jan Gluskie in particular recount with skill and finesse their recollections of the difficulties of committees and finance—all crucial still to the workings of the AGHS.

Among the many people whose own interests in plants and gardens have quietly nourished an interest in gardens in others are Richard Clough, Peter Valder, and journalists such as Anne Latreille and Shirley Stackhouse. Lester Tropman acknowledged that it was 'probably through Peter Valder that I understood the high art of gardening and its importance as quite an esoteric art form and learnt it and appreciated it'. Howard Tanner recalled Peter Valder's great help with his book: 'he is a very funny man and a great fount of knowledge. Somebody in the early 1970s had told me that he was the most knowledgeable man on plants at Sydney University, and he was most generous with his time to both me and the Society.'

Early personal influences which interviewees' recount augment the Collection, making it much more than an organisational record. Peter Valder's interview is testament to the wealth of material related in no way to the formation of the Society yet evocative of another era in gardens and society. With his unique delivery, humour, and modesty he spoke of his childhood of orchards, flowers, neighbours, pit-sawing, chestnuts, and trapping birds—in all, a vanished world. These 'diversions' of the interview, as

he described them, included descriptions of the chestnuts his father sold to market (Peter believes it highly likely that his father was the first person in Australia to do this) and his success catching native birds for sale at Sydney's bird shops. 'Joe Webb, the road man, who lived ... in a sort of hut and cleaned the gutters and things and filled pot holes in the dirt road' at Mount Wilson taught Peter how to attract parrots by whistling and to make horse-hair snares: two gang-gangs trapped this way brought thirty shillings, a fortune for a small boy. About three-quarters into the interview we began at last to discuss the Australian Garden History Society!

It is impossible to overstate the value of the scholarship of the Society—conferences, the journal, associated publications such as *Studies in Australian Garden History*, and *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*. 'The intellectual side of the Society is its real strength', according to Peter Watts and the Society's scholarship has continued to evolve. He continued:

that's why I think the Oxford Companion was so important because when you think about the sort of amateurish way in which we went about doing this work twenty-five years ago and the very professional work that was done by Richard Aitken with the Oxford Companion, that I think is just magic and it just shows the strength of the Society and the growth in stages and in intellect and in processes that's occurred in that twenty-five years that we can come out and do something as clever and as good and as definitive as that is.

The foregoing is but a small fraction of the content of the Society's Oral History Collection. To those who have so generously shared their recollections—their voices—to create this Collection, the Society is indebted.

Oral history has moved in recent decades from the periphery of history to a more significant front seat, and a better understanding of the value of the oral history interview—which is itself a primary source document—has emerged. With that shift has come an understanding that the obsession with facts and figures (which are often accessible in formal documentation) has been replaced by a subtler (and sometimes explicit) recollection of events and experiences that are impossible to garner in other documentation. May the Society's Oral History Project prosper in growth and richness to keep adding to its compelling story.

Australian Garden History Society Oral History Project

INTERVIEWEE	DATE OF INTERVIEW	INTERVIEWER
Australian Capital Territory		
Victor Crittenden	20 Oct 2010	Roslyn Burge
New South Wales		
Dr James Broadbent	20 Aug 2003	Roslyn Burge
Tim North	23 Sept 2003	John Thompson
interviewed in Canberra in association with the National Library of Australia		
Howard Tanner	20 Feb 2004	Roslyn Burge
Peter Watts	1 Aug 2003	Roslyn Burge
Queensland		
Richard Jones	8 Feb 2005	Glenn Cooke
Recording of interview lost—transcript available		
South Australia		
Tony Whitehill and Margaret Sando	26 Nov 2003	Diane Wilkins
Tasmania		
Patricia Cameron	16 Jun 2004	Sallyann Dakis
Miranda Morris-Nunn	4 Jun 2003	Sallyann Dakis
Fairie Nielsen	Oct 2004	Sallyann Dakis
Victoria		
Richard Aitken	3 Dec 2010	Roslyn Burge
Dr Sophie Ducker	6 Sept	Jane Holth
	3 & 21 Oct 2002	
Tom Garnett	7 Nov 2002	Jane Holth
Anne Latreille	Dec 2010	Roslyn Burge
Jocelyn Mitchell	26 May 2003	Jane Holth
Dame Elisabeth Murdoch	9 Sept 2002	Jane Holth
Alethea Russell	1 Dec 2010	Roslyn Burge
Phyllis Simons	25 Sept 2002	Jane Holth
Professor David Yencken	20 Mar 2003	Jane Holth
Western Australia		
Oline Richards	15 Jan 2003	Carol Mansfield
Branch interviews—Sydney and Northern NSW		
Chris Betteridge	20 Mar 2007	Roslyn Burge
Lindsay Bond	2 Dec 2003	Roslyn Burge
Professor Richard Clough	9 Dec 2003	Roslyn Burge
Mary Dougan	6 & 21 Sept 2006	Roslyn Burge
Jan Gluskie	4 Dec 2003	Roslyn Burge
Robin Lewarne	3 Dec 2003	Roslyn Burge
Shirley Stackhouse	23 Nov 2006	Roslyn Burge
Lester Tropman	14 Nov 2006	Roslyn Burge
Dr Peter Valder	13 Mar 2007	Roslyn Burge
Ian Walker	4 Feb 2011	Roslyn Burge
Jean Walker	19 Aug 2007	Roslyn Burge

To access the audio or transcripts of the interviews in the AGHS National Management Committee's Oral History Collection contact the Executive Office, Jackie Courmadias (info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au).

To access the Sydney and Northern NSW Branch Oral History Collection contact the Branch Chair, Stuart Read (Stuart1962@bigpond.com).

Roslyn Burge is a Sydney-based historian who makes extensive use of oral history.



Peter Cuffley

A life in Australia's garden history

One of Peter Cuffley's earliest paintings, of a wildflower garden at Ferntree Gully, undertaken in 1962.

Peter Cuffley has enjoyed a long career as an author of popular books on Australian cultural and social history, but the works closest to his heart have probably been his garden histories.

My mother's family was mostly Irish with a little bit of Devonshire, and my father's partly Irish, but mostly English. My grandfather was extremely English, all entirely in tweeds. So the family had a great affinity with things English and I loved what I would read and see about English gardens. I was born in 1944 and spent my first four years living at my grandparents' house, Eaglemont, at Black Rock in Melbourne's south east. My grandfather was a really passionate gardener, so I had four years of being in a garden with fish ponds and bamboos, cordylines, and flaxes. It was a 1920s bungalow, so that was an influential start. But it was as a child

growing up in Victoria's Dandenong Ranges that I started being really interested in gardening.

The other great influence, even from quite an early age, was travelling to Black Hill at Selby. My uncle's parents had purchased a beautiful property there named Moondai which had a marvelous garden on the mountainside—great mountain grey gums all around and looking out over the bay, and beautiful terraces, stone walls, stone paths, lich gates, and a wonderful Arts and Crafts bungalow-style house, and then a cottage next door as well. The people who gardened next door had actually originally created Moondai and all of it had that wonderful Edna Walling feel, or what I later realised was an Edna Walling feel. I really got to love Moondai garden because we would go there on holidays. It was quite isolated and had no electricity.

In 1948–49 my parents built a house at Ferntree Gully and that started a long, long association—my mother has only recently left that house after 59 years, and she gardened there all that time. My grandparents left Black Rock at about the same time we left for Ferntree Gully, but they settled nearby at Tecoma. We always thought it was really gorgeous because they lived in a cottage called The Nest, in Gums Avenue. Two doors down was David Matthews, who was the curator of the Footscray Botanic Gardens, and his garden was superb. I remember going as a child to see it and stepping down and down through this garden of rooms to a point where you reached all these huge eucalypts at the fantastic bottom of the garden. My grandmother's garden was very similar but it was just a cottage garden, although again it was influential in that it was all stone edges, gravel paths, hardy plants.

we were surrounded by bush...
there was no power...
and we had no running water

My mother was a good practical gardener who created quite a large garden out of cuttings and pots from church fetes and stuff, but also we had some of the great nurseries nearby, so she would go to Chandler's at The Basin to get the special things. And in our street we had some very good gardeners too. Ferntree Gully was quite rural when we went there. It had a local show, and we were surrounded by bush. When we arrived there was no power, so we had kerosene lamps for two years, and we had no running water for the first year. There was lovely bushland around and the garden space we had was a clearing and my mother set to work. My mother was a really natural gardener who seemed to be able to grow plants readily even though the soil was all rock and clay unlike the rich volcanic soil elsewhere in the Dandenongs, so it was really hard country. So it was great growing up in that garden and that area, with lovely old farmhouses. The Chaundy brothers were still running a market garden at the bottom of our hill. They had a lovely old horse and dray and would take the horse out and put him on the plough.

I was keen on gardening from my primary school age and my mother allotted me a portion down the bottom of the block where I put stone edges and a little pond—I think I was about eight. I remember one of my friends relatively recently said 'Gee you were a funny kid. We were always playing football and you were making a bloody garden.' I was a bit of an oddball.



My teenage years were busy. In 1960 I went off to work for a year at the Isadore Kosminsky Galleries and that gave me a different perspective altogether. It was Old Melbourne, quite wonderful, and Kosminskys was Dickensian at that time. All sorts of interesting people came in—I particularly remember Dame Mabel Brookes. I saw all sorts of houses at that time and often took stuff out to clients.

I went back to study, in 1961, undertaking a diploma of advertising design and illustration at Swinburne. When I got there we still had plaster casts and did life and costume drawing, nature drawing, ceramics, print making, and painting. So while it sounded like we were just doing commercial art, it was so much more than that. We studied history of art and architecture, and if I remember rightly Robin Boyd was doing his

Peter Cuffley with his painting of Jean Galbraith's garden Dunedin at Tyers (Vic.)—the story of this painting is lovingly related by Peter in *Australian Garden History*, 9 (1), July/August 1997.

television series at that time and I came to love his work. We had lots of hands-on experience although by the time I got to Swinburne I'd taught myself to paint. This drove our teacher, Laurie Pendlebury, who was a great academic painter, bats because I wouldn't listen to him. I'd paint away the way I always painted, doing all sorts of terrible things like starting at one corner and working my way across to the other. I established a style of painting which incorporated elements of modernist paintings although I became interested in colonial landscape painting.

*we spent our Wednesday afternoons, when we
should have been doing something else...
looking at houses and gardens*

I was then right in the middle of Glenferrie on the border of Hawthorn and we spent our Wednesday afternoons, when we should have been doing something else—we were studentship holders and not meant to leave the college—walking looking at houses and gardens until we discovered almost every interesting house and garden in the Hawthorn area, and particularly the ones down towards the Yarra River. That was highly influential too, and I read—when I got to Swinburne I found this huge library full of books, I must just have read my way through the library. And while the other students were socialising at the nearest coffee shop I was busy working for an antique dealer part time.

I also discovered old books, some of those *Beautiful Britains* and those sorts of books. I read lots of classics at that period—Jane Austen, Dickens, and that sort of thing, but also lots of Australian books and I became particularly interested in Australian history. I started collecting lamps and chairs and all sorts of other items in 1961 and then my parents moved in a little bungalow at home and gave it to me to have as a studio.

In 1964 my aunt loaned me the February 1940 issue of *Australian Home Beautiful* which was an important influence. Not only was Culla Hill—my mother's great grandparents' house at Eltham—featured but there was also a marvelous article about Eryldene, with beautiful Cazneax photographs. Our family had gone to Eltham in 1842–43 and our old family home—which was a gorgeous miniature colonial bungalow—was probably built in 1853. It had a beautiful stone-edged garden with lots of lovely old plants, but when you opened the pages of that same *Home Beautiful* there was Eryldene. In later years I talked to Cazneax's daughter and had the most wonderful conversation with her—she'd once

come to Castlemaine with her father and had photographed the big gum tree at Guildford. I just adored Eryldene. When I finally went there to give a talk many years later it was so wonderful to be in that place and it was just a treat to put Eryldene in my book on cottages because I felt it came within the broad spectrum of cottages—it's certainly not a mansion.

In 1969 I was posted to teach at Hamilton and rented a fabulous six-bedroom Edwardian farmhouse with two acres set within a grove of pines with giant stables with a marvelous garden, an old vegie garden that I completely revived, a wonderful shade house, and a huge rockery which I restored. I was on the National Trust Hamilton Branch committee and I made a point of visiting as many places as I could in the Western District. So that was another learning curve. During 1970–71 my first wife and I created the Wedderburn General Store Museum. When I got to Wedderburn, in the central Victorian goldfields area, there were still people living in earth-floored cottages having no running water and no electricity but with beautiful cottage gardens. Marvelous old people who were all riding rusty old bicycles, living on absolutely nothing or scratching for gold round about, or working in the eucalyptus distilleries. I was transported back to an earlier Australia that I'd been reading about at Swinburne in the sixties and here much of it was still alive.

*I was transported back to
an earlier Australia*

Working at Hamilton I'd gone through Ballarat and I'd had my nose up against the Cyclone wire fence of Sovereign Hill. Having taught secondary school boys and wondered how we could ever get them interested in history, I could see that something living like Sovereign Hill—where the experience was first hand—I thought 'This is going to be it'. I'd taken some interest in the Pioneer Settlement at Swan Hill, but when I saw Sovereign Hill beginning, I thought 'I've got to get into this place' and I kept pestering them. I think at first they said I could become an education officer but I finally managed to talk my way in and in 1972 became the first curator of history. I got to do the work of creating the cottage garden around the miner's cottage and to do that I went back to my mother who still had hollyhocks, foxgloves, and similar old-fashioned plants. At that time, in 1972–73, the garden history and heritage nursery movements hadn't really got moving. I'm sure I could have found a lot more if I'd gone looking, but people like my



mother still had plants that we could put into that garden at Sovereign Hill.

During that period we purchased Preston Vale at Sedgwick, near Bendigo—it was a mad thing to buy but in those days you could get such properties for next to nothing. It was a lovely old farmhouse in a wonderful granite valley with eucalypts up on the hills and a pear orchard of 80 trees, two giant palms, and a great radiata pine. We left Ballarat in 1976 to settle there and set to work to restore the house and rescue the garden, which was wildly overgrown. It was a really interesting period because that's when the real focus on garden history got going, from 1976 onwards, and I met people in the area who were veteran gardeners.

*it was a mad thing to buy
but in those days you could get such
properties for next to nothing*

Probably the most influential thing that happened in that period is that an old family friend from Selby, Vivienne Mair, and her brother Fred Moss said 'Let's go and look for Peter Cuffley' knowing that I'd been close to the family. By this time they'd moved to cottages side by side in Wesley Hill near Castlemaine, but in the intervening period Babs Mair had lived at Mooroolbark. (Once when she was developing her block there she got off the train with all her cases and two children and a woman at the station said 'Do you want a ride?'—it was Edna Walling; she gave her a ride to her block and they became good friends.) Babs had not only grown up in a fantastic farm garden at Nuggetty near Maldon, but she had always been a passionate gardener, and I used to go down and spend lots of time with her just slowly working our way through her garden. She was a friend of Susan Irvine, or Susan St Leon as she was then, and heritage roses were one of her great fortes. Fred Moss had earlier purchased Kent's Cottage, at Chewton, later to become Badger's Keep nursery run by Margaret and Clive Windmill who extended the garden and gradually but surely built up a marvelous collection of fruit trees and heritage roses. Fred was a great friend of the Leviny's and some of his iris bulbs are in the Buda garden. When Hilda Leviny died in 1981, I did a complete photo survey of the garden and heard lots of stories about Buda from Babs, so my interest in plants is all quite interwoven. It was a lovely time and there was a marvelous wave of enthusiasm with the first garden history conference in 1980 and the earliest specialised books and catalogues that came out. Having



been a National Trust member from 1964 I was well aware of the interest in houses and although I loved gardens it took that little while for the garden side of heritage to really capture people's imagination.

When my book *Cottage Gardens in Australia* was published in 1983 there were only a few Australian garden history books around. I remember going to the State Library of Victoria and finding J.J. Rule's catalogue and all those other wonderful nursery catalogues, looking in all the photo collections, and really starting to get very excited about building that book. It took a massive amount of work and the lovely thing was to be able to write it from my desk at Preston Vale looking into the garden. Derrick Stone, the publisher, was another Swinburne graduate, so we were both interested in the visual side of

'I've even got a couple of mad modernist paintings tucked away somewhere'—sadly this is not one of those, but Peter's transitional painting from 1963 (complete with miniature self portrait of the artist exalting amidst a stylised colonial landscape) incorporates elements of modernist abstraction with the flat perspective favoured by some primitive colonial painters.

Peter Cuffley with Tom Garnett at the launch of Peter's book *Creating Your Own Period Garden* (1984) at Buda.

publishing and had already set a pattern with my earlier books. Really it was timing, I guess, and in the end that book had a remarkable life selling in excess of 30,000 copies. The cottage garden book had all sorts of spin offs in that the Garden History Society was really getting moving at that time and by 1984 people were saying 'Would you design us a garden?'. When I look back and think, I guess as an artist I had the qualifications for one aspect of it and as a plantsman I was at least used to gardening. I've designed gardens, mostly in central Victoria, although I did design a couple in Hawthorn. So it was strange having a partial career as a garden designer but I felt it was a logical part of what I was doing, being an artist, as someone who'd been used to drawing.

*I'm still passionate about gardens,
but particularly about
historic cultural landscapes*

I went to the Australian Garden History Society 1984 Ballarat conference and gave a paper. Those I remember meeting in those early days included Anne Latreille, Tommy Garnet, and Helen Vellacott. Helen was a friend of Vivienne Mair, so when I was doing my book *Cottage Gardens in Australia*, Helen loaned me Jean Galbraith's book *Garden in a Valley*, which I later reprinted. We had a brilliant time doing it and I said 'Well, if I'm going to be the designer, I'll paint the cover painting'. My style had gradually evolved into what we've since called 'naive super-realism' and it was fantastic when I finally got to show the painting to Jean because she said 'Oh, I feel like writing a story about someone who walked into a painting'.

Invitation to the launch of *Cottage Gardens in Australia*.

My biggest-selling book was *Chandeliers and Billy Tea*, which sold over 40,000 copies. The lamp book which came out in 1973 is still being sold and *Houses of the Twenties & Thirties* was very popular. I'm still a keen social historian, a keen family historian, but I guess I'm now a retired author. I recently worked on the book *Henry Handel Richardson in Maldon* and upgraded our Buda garden booklet, originally done for the Australian Garden History Society in 1999, and I've got one more family history book that I want to do. I'm still passionate about gardens, but particularly about historic cultural landscapes—their recognition has been one of the big battles in the last decade.



Peter Cuffley now lives and gardens in Maldon in Victoria's central goldfields region.



Abigail Belfrage

Garden history and the web: dipping, dabbling, and diving

Whatever level of interest and experience you have in using the web, here we highlight some key sites in the (sometimes) confusing world of online resources and software for garden history research.

As a keen garden history researcher have you been peering over the cliff edge of the ocean that is the World Wide Web? Perhaps you like a paddle now and then? You may even be a long-distance swimmer or dawn surfer. Whatever description best fits your expertise I hope this article helps you make some handy discoveries. First up, I thought I'd tackle some terminology.

Web 2.0: This is a term used to distinguish functionality that has become available on the web from its previous functionality and activity. The main difference is the ability of people to now create online content without having to create their own website from scratch. An example of this is the ability to comment on an online newspaper article. Prior to the introduction of Web 2.0, the web had been used in a fairly

simple one-way fashion where the web owner put up content that others could only read, but not add to. Web 2.0 also describes a cultural as well as a technological shift, towards the sharing of information, resources, and ideas.

App: This is a shortened version of the word 'application' or the phrase 'web application'. An application is a website or web-based software that is task focussed, such as an online catalogue, internet banking, or a web-based navigation system.

Mobile device: A term used to describe a portable hand-held gadget that enables people to get online. The most common are mobile phones (that receive the internet), known as smart phones, and tablets, such as ipads and kindles.

Social media: Wikipedia defines this as 'the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue'. Or in other words, online software or websites that enable people to communicate with each other, other than email. Examples of these are Facebook and Twitter.

The National Library of Australia's digitised newspaper project (available through the NLA's Trove portal) has extraordinary research potential including little-known writings by quite well-known authors.

Why get online?

In my experience there are two main reasons to go online for research. Firstly you can get access to resources that otherwise would be out of reach. Secondly you can share information and ideas with people having similar research interests who you might not otherwise have met. And there's an overlap, members of the online community can often put you in contact with resources, and you can meet people by collaborating in projects online.

Sources online

Digitisation and publication of cultural collections on the web is happening on a day-to-day basis, so it is worthwhile checking regularly to see what is coming online.

Archives, libraries, galleries, and museums:

Institutions and organisations around Australia and internationally are capturing images of their collections (the new verb is 'to image'!) and making these digital copies available online. Such institutions are also devising new ways for people to find and utilise online collections. It is rapidly becoming easier to locate digitised maps, manuscripts, objects, photographs, correspondence, film, artworks, reports, books, newspapers, and many other resources for researching gardens and landscapes.

Collections Australia Network: This is a brilliant resource for researchers, and for organisations that look after collections. Collections Australia Online holds information from collections around Australia, including community-based and local history collections. It is possible to see either catalogue data or, where available, digitised copies of collection items. It can be used as a powerful research tool or as a lovely wander into the breadth and depth of Australian cultural collections.

Heritage databases: National Trusts, and State, Territory, and Commonwealth heritage authorities around Australia and internationally have their heritage register databases online. Entries on heritage databases typically provide valuable summary information about culturally significant places, including landscapes and gardens, and can be a useful first port of call in a research project.

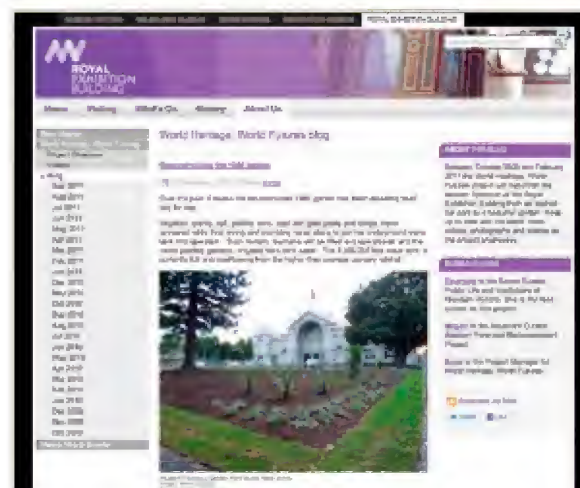
Google Earth: This delightful and versatile web application lets me navigate and view images of the earth's surface as though I'm flying through the air—aerial photography on steroids! From the air, I can explore landscapes, towns, gardens, oceans, and a range of data layers that can be switched on and off. In the app's 'street view' I can navigate from the ground, as though I'm walking down the

street. On the left hand side of the Google Earth screen is a range of controls that enables people to search for and navigate to destinations, save places they'd like to revisit, and switch on layers such as outlines, labels, and other data.

Humans online: discussing, building, and sharing

Social media has given people new ways to exchange ideas and information, and to collaborate. A distinctive feature of social media is that people don't need to have programming skills to contribute content. A lot of the interfaces (what the user sees) do all that programming for you and are becoming easier to use, especially for the non-technical person.

Blogs: The term 'blog' is derived from the phrase 'web log', and, as the name suggests, is a way for someone to write entries about whatever they wish! It is an ideal format for a project, or a process or hobby that has news or updates. There are many kinds of blog software available online that are easy to set up, and don't cost anything. They allow the blogger to upload images, video, and sound. If you're setting one up for a project or for business communication, remember to obtain advice on backing up the content in case the platform disappears (unless you're hosting it yourself). Blogs can be thought of as simple websites to run and to contribute to—try Wordpress <http://wordpress.org/> or Blogger <http://www.blogger.com/>



Facebook: This is the most widely used social media site, with, according to Wikipedia, at least 750 million global users. It is a privately owned commercial enterprise, however, it is free to set up an account. Individuals and organisations can use it to post messages, images, videos, and other resources. It can also be used to organise events. It can be a useful resource for research communities

Picture Australia
<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/>

Collections Australia Online
<http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/>

Heritage Council of Western Australia Places Database
<http://register.heritage.wa.gov.au/index.html>

Europeana
<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>

Google Earth
(this application needs to be downloaded to your computer)
<http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>

Archive of American Gardens
http://www.gardens.si.edu/horticulture/res_ed/AAG/home.htm

This screen shot shows the 'World Heritage, World Futures' blog hosted by Museum Victoria in connection with the research, landscaping, and planting of the 1880s garden in the western forecourt of the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne. The blog is being used to show the various stages of the project, explain the works being undertaken, and to receive comments from interested members of the public.

Reproduced with permission of Museum Victoria

to use as a noticeboard and keep in touch about their activities and interests. (www.facebook.com)

Flickr: This website is a very popular online place for people to share images and information (metadata) about images. A fascinating range of images can be found there including historic and recently taken photographs. Contributors vary, from individual to institution. One of the many useful things about Flickr is the ability for visitors to the site to add comments to images. Sydney's Powerhouse Museum has actively sought this input via Flickr from interested members of the public (see discussion of Crowdsourcing further on in this article) to gather information about the content and context of the images in their collection.

Twitter: One of my favourite sharing and learning tools is Twitter (www.twitter.com). I use it to get mini-updates from people and organisations I choose. I can write my own updates, or pass ones I receive to people who choose to 'follow' me. These snippets are called 'tweets' and are a maximum of 140 characters long—just enough to hold a single idea or web link.

Because I follow Heritage Victoria's Twitter account I receive their tweets. I can send these on (called 'retweeting') or write and send my own. I follow twitter accounts that relate to my interests: Australian and international archives, libraries, and other collections, digital humanities, some journalists and news agencies, and artists, designers, and thinkers. Unless you're in business and are using it for marketing, the point of Twitter for most users is to share information. You don't have to send tweets yourself to get something out of Twitter, but you can! Twitter can be found on the websites of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, The American Public Gardens Association, NSW Seedbank, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Crowdsourcing: This is where the combined efforts of individual people online create a resource that everyone can use—online. Or it may be where contributions and solutions are sought from the general online public, or perhaps a specific online audience with particular skills.

Wikis: Wikis are great examples of crowdsourced information resources you can utilise, or contribute to, as part of the 'crowd'. You've probably found yourself poking around in Wikipedia via an internet search result, or you've gone there deliberately to follow up, or add to a reference. The information on Wikipedia has been compiled by individual researchers rather than a single organisation—commonly referred to as the 'crowd'. There are

rules and conventions around adding content on Wikipedia. The most important rule is that entries must be based on published references.

The technology behind Wikipedia is an example of the use of wiki software. This platform enables changes to be made to content on the page by users, and for all these versions and revisions to be visible. As in the Mallala community history website below, wikis are ideal tools for communities to collaborate on research projects and information resources, enabling people to add their knowledge, and grow additional functionality like the location-based component on the Mallala site's front page.

National Library of Australia's Newspapers

Online: Recently merged with Trove, itself a magnificent online research resource, the National Library of Australia's Newspapers Online crowdsourcing project is well worth a look. But be warned, you may get sucked in by the urge to fix up text and disappear for hours. The NLA and its partners have digitised thousands of pages of Australian microfilmed newspapers and magazines. Text recognition software has then been run over the digitised articles, generating text (on the left) from the images. The software-generated text generally has errors in it and that's where the crowd comes in and corrects these errors.

To get an idea of how big and breathtakingly busy this crowd is, consider these statistics. As of July 2011 at least 41,712,675 lines of text had been corrected since June 2008, including 1,470,792 lines in the last month (July 2011)—check this site out at <http://trove.nla.gov.au/system/stats?env=prod> Go crowd!

Mallala Community Heritage wiki
<http://mallala.nowandthen.net.au>

Ballarat and District Industrial Heritage Project wiki
http://bih.ballarat.edu.au/index.php/Ballarat_and_District_Industrial_Heritage_Project

Wikipedia (the online encyclopaedia)
www.wikipedia.org/

Wikimedia (downloadable wiki software)
www.wikimedia.org

Home page of the Mallala community history website.



Feeling like a swim?

Sticking your toe in: There are some great resources around for the beginner. Many neighbourhood houses and local libraries offer 'introduction to the web' courses. A number of genealogical societies also run seminars on using the web for online genealogical research—a great introduction to online research. You can also try Wikipedia to search for terminology you'd like definitions for or discussions about (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). The ABC and the BBC also have useful explanations on their websites for growing your web savvy-ness and confidence (<http://www.abc.net.au/technology/techexplained/> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/>).

Peeling off the floaties: Use the web to learn to use the web! I have found great ideas for history researchers using Twitter, such as <http://blog.historians.org/resources/1393/five-ways-for-historians-to-use-twitter>. William J. Turkel's blog, especially this lovely Going Digital post is also a favourite (<http://williamjturkel.net/2011/03/15/going-digital/>). Youtube has video tutorials and presentations about using the web—click on 'Youtube Help' and find out how to post your own talks, walks, and demonstrations (<http://www.youtube.com/>). Historypin is another goodie, where you can combine historic images and online mapping technology (<http://www.historypin.com/>). Another useful resource is the Report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce (<http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/gov20taskforcereport/doc/Government20TaskforceReport.pdf>).

A running leap: For those who want to make their own online spaces, investigate the tutorials, definitions, and standards from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) (<http://www.w3.org/>) or Google Earth's tutorials (<http://www.google.com/earth/learn/>).

Exhausted? Excited by the possibilities?

Frankly, when it comes to the web I'm a bit of both. Sometimes I just close down my Twitter session with a sigh and (continuing with my ocean analogy), lie down on my towel and catch my breath. There's so much to absorb—so much activity and inventiveness, and so many new resources coming online. A few observations before I pack up and leave the beach:

Digitisation of collections is core business for public cultural institutions. More and more resources for research are becoming available

online. The web is well and truly establishing itself as viable research platform for garden history.

Sharing is cool. People and institutions are increasingly using social media to exchange ideas, information, and resources. People are sharing their time and consolidating their research efforts in these spaces. Even software is being shared, or released as open source, in a way that wasn't imaginable 10 years ago. It's a good time to find other people and resources online.

Enjoy the discovery. Try a few sites and tools, or explore new ones, and give yourself time to plug away, learn, and enjoy what you discover. Ask your friends what they use online, and why.

Ultimately, I think of these digital developments as a continuation of what human beings have been doing for millennia—building networks, tools, and knowledge—just in a new environment. The power of computing, digital formats, and the connectedness of the web gives us new ways to express ourselves, but the urge to explore, interact, and learn in this digital space is ancient and very human.

Some other useful sites are:

The Programming Historian (advanced W.J. Turkel!)

<http://niche-canada.org/programming-historian>

Linked data and the semantic web

<http://linkeddata.org/>

Zotero (a valuable tool for online research)

<http://www.zotero.org/>

For exploring the emerging discipline of digital humanities:

DH Answers

<http://digitalhumanities.org/answers/>

Scholars Lab

<http://www2.lib.virginia.edu/scholarslab/>

Australasian Association for the Digital Humanities

<http://aa-dh.org/>

Abigail Belfrage is a historian working in Online Engagement at Public Record Office Victoria. She is managing a pilot project to create online transcription and text encoding software for public records held at PROV. She is an active member of the Professional Historians Association (Victoria). <http://twitter.com/abigailbelfrage>



Matthew Stephens

Entering the garden of digital delights

Digitisation can provide virtual libraries—globally and around the clock—with only a few keystrokes, but how do Australian publications and voices fare in this rapidly developing biblio-cyberworld?

It is 1804 and we are standing in the front garden of Government House, Parramatta. At our feet, shrubs and small trees are wedged between the garden's white picket fence and the brick border of the entrance drive, and our eye is drawn over the gate to High Street and its long stretch towards the horizon. Along this dusty track, its length flanked by paling-edged geometric garden plots, run two rows of small white cottages whose regimented lines are softened slightly by the occasional orchard and remnant stands of native bush.

My description of this rather idyllic scene, painted by George Evans at the turn of the nineteenth century, is based on nothing more than the bits and bytes I have accessed online. From almost anywhere in the world, we are able to step into this lost landscape, savour its foreignness for just a moment, before the inevitable questions about

'truth' and artistic license steal it away. We have online access to information relating to the history of Australian gardens unimaginable less than a decade ago and the challenge for us now is not only how to find the best information available, but whether there is a place for an Australian voice within the cacophony of global digitisation.

The recent flood of resources relating to garden history in Australia includes pictorial, archival, and published sources dating back to the eighteenth century. While some of these tools have been created by overseas corporations, government institutions, and education bodies, much of the most interesting material has been made available locally through the work of the National Library of Australia, state government agencies, and smaller special libraries and archives.

In early 2010 the National Library of Australia launched its new search engine, Trove (<http://trove.nla.gov.au/>), providing the ability to simultaneously search the collections of hundreds of Australian institutions across a number of different formats. From a single search box the user is able to source information such as book

High Street
Parramatta, from the
gates of Government
House, around 1804,
by George Evans.

Caroline Simpson
Collection, Historic
Houses Trust of NSW—
[http://collection.hht.net.
au/images_linked/31758/
MOS2007_15.jpg](http://collection.hht.net.au/images_linked/31758/MOS2007_15.jpg)

and journal holdings in Australian libraries, almost two million Australian images, historic Australian newspapers dating back to 1803, online maps, and a wide selection of digitised publications.

While there has been a concerted effort to digitise pictures and newspapers in Australia as well as some Australian monographs, we have relied mainly on international efforts to digitise those foreign publications we know to have influenced Australian society. The world's oldest digital library, Project Gutenberg (<http://www.gutenberg.org/>), was established as far back as 1971 and historic Australian texts were later distributed by an Australian offshoot. Since Google announced plans, in 2004, to digitise 15 million volumes held by major American and European libraries through Google Books (<http://books.google.com.au/>), access to online texts has increased dramatically. Supplementing Google are the efforts of sites such as the non-profit Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/>) and the Biodiversity Heritage Library (<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>)—a service formed by a consortium of 12 natural history and botanical libraries.

While we now have millions of texts available, it can be difficult to locate digitised copies of books among the billions of pages on the Web. Here online catalogues such as WorldCat

(<http://www.worldcat.org/>) and the Hathi Trust (<http://www.hathitrust.org/>) provide an invaluable way of locating electronic copies of books across a range of publication hosts.

There is a general misconception that when we talk about online information we are referring only to content in image form, whether it is a painting, photograph, manuscript, or published work. The reality is that only a small percentage of the world's historic information is available as an image and that online sources are frequently limited to brief text-based records available through databases such as the Colonial Plants Database (http://www.hht.net.au/research/colonial_plants), indexes, online catalogues, and other finding aids. Neither should we forget that the most pertinent sources may not yet be listed online at all!

Accessing the local via the global

Libraries within Australia are making some effort to scale up the digitisation of locally published historic texts, including works relating to the history of gardens. Titles such as *The South Australian Vigneron and Gardeners' Manual* (1843) and *The Flower Garden in Queensland* (1875) are readily available online though, perhaps tellingly, are not titles available through major sites such as Google Books or the Internet Archive. This is not to say that Australian publications do not appear on these international sites as one can access titles like *The Sydney Magazine of Science and Art* (1858–59), digitised from a Stanford University Library copy, and *Catalogue of Plants in the Royal Society's Gardens, Queen's Park, Hobart Town, Tasmania* (1857) digitised from a copy belonging to the University of Chicago Library. It is clear, however, that if we relied solely on international institutions to digitise their copies of Australian works, the title choices would be arbitrary and the coverage incomplete.

The recent announcement by the British Library that Google Books will scan 250,000 of the Library's titles is welcome, but there is little expectation that this will include many Australian publications. One might hope, however, that more British publications about Australia or those known to have been consumed in Australia will be digitised and offer the opportunity for new ways of researching and understanding Australian garden history. Online access to historic Australian newspapers has already contributed to our knowledge of which British garden texts were being imported and sold in Australia, and many of these are now available electronically through international sites.



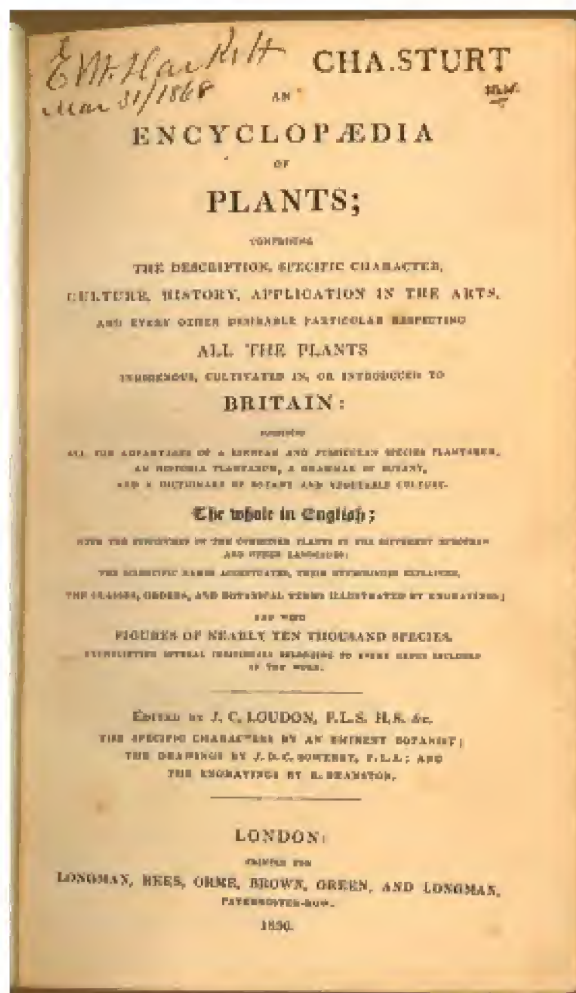
Horticultural magazine, and gardeners' and amateurs' calendar: containing the transactions of the Horticultural Society of Sydney, 1864–67, with inserted cuttings.

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of NSW

Maintaining an Australian voice

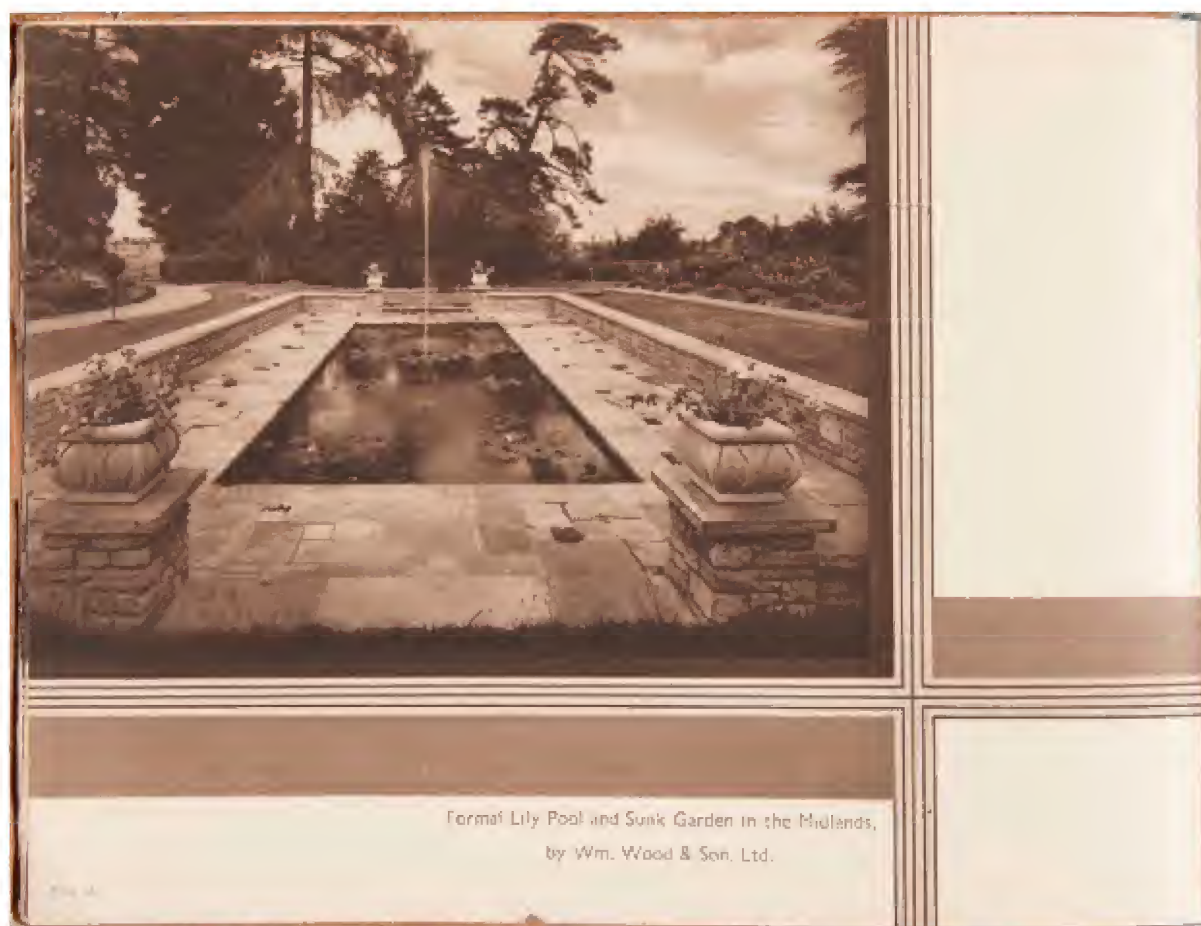
I work for the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. One of the challenges for its Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection (CSL&RC) in communicating garden history through its collection is to identify evidence of local activity and thought. This is a nuanced approach that is not always easy in the face of the abundance of printed mass communication of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One cannot assume, for example, that all British publications made it to Australian shores or, if they did, had equal influence. The CSL&RC always looks for evidence of local use when acquiring early non-Australian titles: is it a copy that was used in Australia, is it listed in early Australian library catalogues, or is it mentioned in the local press of the time? Sometimes we will still purchase a title with little such evidence to provide a broader context to the works we know were used here.

One might then ask whether there is a difference between a digitised copy of a book on Google Books from University of Michigan Library and a copy in the CSL&RC in Sydney. I would suggest that there can be. Take for example our copy of J.C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Plants* (1836) which was originally acquired in 1841



Annotated title page from J.C. Loudon, *An Encyclopaedia of Plants*, Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green and Longman, London, 1836.

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of NSW



William Wood & Son Limited, *Recent Work*, William Wood & Son, Taplow, Bucks., [September 1936]. This copy belonged to Eric Hammond, Edna Walling's close associate and foremost garden builder.

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of NSW

Searl & Sons, *Pocket Garden Guide*, June [1922]. From Throsby Park, Moss Vale.

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of NSW



by Charles Sturt (1795–1869) while assistant commissioner of lands for South Australia, and then later owned by nurseryman, Elisha Hackett (c.1826–1914), founder of a prominent South Australian nursery firm. We also note in our catalogue that this was advertised locally as a ‘popular and standard work’ and that an 1841 edition was owned by William Sharp Macleay at Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney. Understandably, this Australian context is completely absent from the volume digitised at Michigan and its accompanying record on Google Books.

This is not to say that the Google Books copy is not of use as it is the only copy of this edition available online, but what if the Australian copy has been marked with the thoughts of its owners? We have, for example, Governor George Grey’s copy of the *Royal South Australia Almanack and Directory for 1840* in which Charles Sturt is

listed as a government employee. Grey has left no comment next to Sturt’s name but notes his opinion of other employees, such as Keeper of the Park Lands, Nick Boys Ball Esq., who Grey rates as ‘useless’! The pages with these comments have been digitised and added to our catalogue record for this title. More recently we have acquired two English catalogues of garden ornament which had belonged to Edna Walling’s close associate and garden builder, Eric Hammond. These two catalogues, *Liberty’s Garden Pottery* (1910) and *Recent Work* by William Wood & Son Limited (1935) provide an interesting context to the work of both Walling and Hammond.

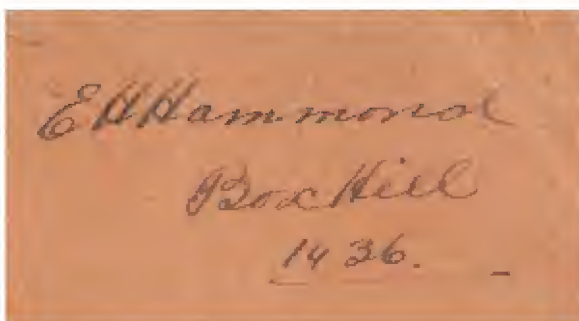
The Historic House Libraries Database

Our interest in provenance and book history in Australia is now focussed on the development of the Historic House Libraries Database. The libraries from a number of the houses under the care of the Historic Houses Trust are to be listed and the database will note copy-specific details such as ownership, bookseller and binder labels, and the existence of annotations. The first library to be added to the database consists of 500 titles recently acquired by the Historic Houses Trust as part of the transfer of Throsby Park, Moss Vale, from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Included among a number of treasures is a series of monthly *Pocket Garden Guides* produced by Searl & Sons in 1922. Digitised copies of these rare little booklets have been attached to records in our catalogue and provide a possible clue to the source for plantings at Throsby Park in the early 1920s.

The speed with which new resources have come online has been remarkable and Australia has led the world in connecting collections with its community. The sheer size of international digitisation programs such as Google Books, however, means that an Australian perspective on the many historic texts made available is likely to come from institutions on the ground interested in local contexts rather than the international players. Entering the garden of digital delights is sure to provide not only rich research rewards but immense pleasure as well, but it will take a concerted effort on the part of our institutions, local societies, and individuals to ensure it is a garden that we recognise as our own and not solely a vision of American and European interests.

Ownership annotation of Eric Hammond on his copy of William Wood & Son’s *Recent Work* (1935).

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of NSW



Matthew Stephens reference librarian at the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales.



Trevor Nottle

Remembering Tim North

Always known as ‘Tim’, David Arthur Guy North (1921–2011) was born in London between the great world wars and died in Canberra ninety years later after a long, productive, and eventful life. He will be remembered fondly by many of those who knew him as a warm hearted, generous, encouraging, and thoughtful person who had a deep love of horticulture, writing, and gardening.

Educated at Uppingham School, and at Cambridge, Tim stepped down to enlist aged 19 and made a career in the Army where he served as a Captain in Italy and Gibraltar during WWII. Promoted to Major after the war Tim saw active service in Palestine during ‘the troubles’ that accompanied the founding of Israel. After his retirement from the Army Tim settled in Norfolk and then Essex, growing bulbs and cut flowers, and beginning his long love affair with plants and gardening. During 1962 he began writing for *Amateur Gardening*.

Arriving in Australia in 1965 he had recently decided, while still in the UK, on a career as a

journalist who wrote about popular gardening and more seriously, horticulture. He made quite an impact, bringing with him as he did an historical perspective drawn from a heritage of English gardening, practical experience there, and a strong list of contacts with gardening journalists in that country. Tim had a strong entrepreneurial streak as a free-lance journalist writing for magazines ranging from *Australian Horticulture* (20 years), *Australian House & Garden* (23 years) to local newspapers.

Marrying Keva, in 1979, the couple began a remarkable career as publishers of a gardening magazine called *Garden Cuttings* which found a readership among passionate gardeners in Australia and beyond. Paired with this venture the couple also offered a range of garden tours within Australia and overseas in which Keva’s organisational skills perfectly matched Tim’s knowledge of gardens and gardeners. At first set up in a small office converted from a downstairs room at their home in Woolhara, the business prospered and eventually shifted house when Keva and Tim moved to Bowral.

Chris Webb, Wollemi pine, and Tim North (spade in hand), at Milton Park, Bowral, in 2006. Planted by the Southern Highlands Branch for the Society’s 25th anniversary celebrations, this memorial tree planting celebrates Tim’s contribution to the AGHS.

Photo: Charlotte Webb

A founding member of the Australian Garden History Society Tim had definite and positive views about how such an organisation should operate and what its objectives should be. He put his convictions forward and argued his case with others equally committed to getting the AGHS firmly established as a vital and learned society. The discourse and engagement were, and remain, significant drivers in the formation and success of the Society. The balance of academic and populist appeal proved a challenge to negotiate and review, as it still does today. This is one of the great strengths which keeps the Society in the forefront of gardens as signatures of our cultural ambitions. Tim played a major role in developing and maintaining the dialogue between professional and amateur interests in the history of gardens in Australia.

By happenstance Tim and Keva were able to offer the society their *Garden Cuttings* magazine as the vehicle to deliver the means of reaching a significant readership. This rose from around 300 in 1982 to 2750 in 1989 and included several hundred overseas subscribers. The magazine changed name at this time (1983), becoming *Australian Garden Journal*; ownership and editorial control remaining with the North's but with significant input from the Society and its learned members. This mutually advantageous arrangement lasted until 1989 by which time the Society was sufficiently established financially to venture on its own publications and administration which continue to the present. During this period Tim was the Secretary of the AGHS.

Tim, ever thoughtful and organised, had decided that by his 75th birthday he would retire as a publisher and took steps to wind up his business career. Unable to find a buyer in a very difficult time for publishers the magazine was wound up in 1996. Passionate gardeners in Australia, who believed gardening was as much an art form and a science as it was a recreation, lost a national mainstay for their convictions.

The Horticultural Media Association of Australia honoured Tim's contribution to the industry in 2002 by awarding him the 'Silver Laurel Hall of Fame' award for his longstanding contribution to communicating and encouraging a love of gardening to the public.

Trevor Nottle describes himself as a friend and a beneficiary of Tim's guidance and encouragement. He wishes to acknowledge John Stowar, Chris and Charlotte Webb, Keva North, and the National Library of Australia for their assistance in preparing this tribute.

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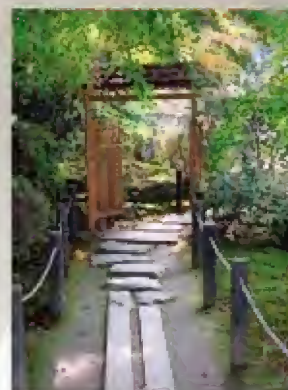
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It is not normally our custom to review commercial websites in Netscape but for the exchange of a trifling amount of personal detail it is not hard to play Faust to NearMap's Mephistopheles. The advent, development, and refinement of digital photography—which has moved with remarkable pace in such a short space of time—has enabled companies such as Perth-based NearMap to produce aerial photographs of stunning resolution and speed. Many readers will be familiar with Google Earth (discussed elsewhere in this issue by Abigail Belfrage), with its ability to zoom photographically and topographically into far corners of the earth. NearMap does this for many parts of Australia with stunning clarity. Such digital photography is entirely compatible with web-based platforms, giving great flexibility in end point use.

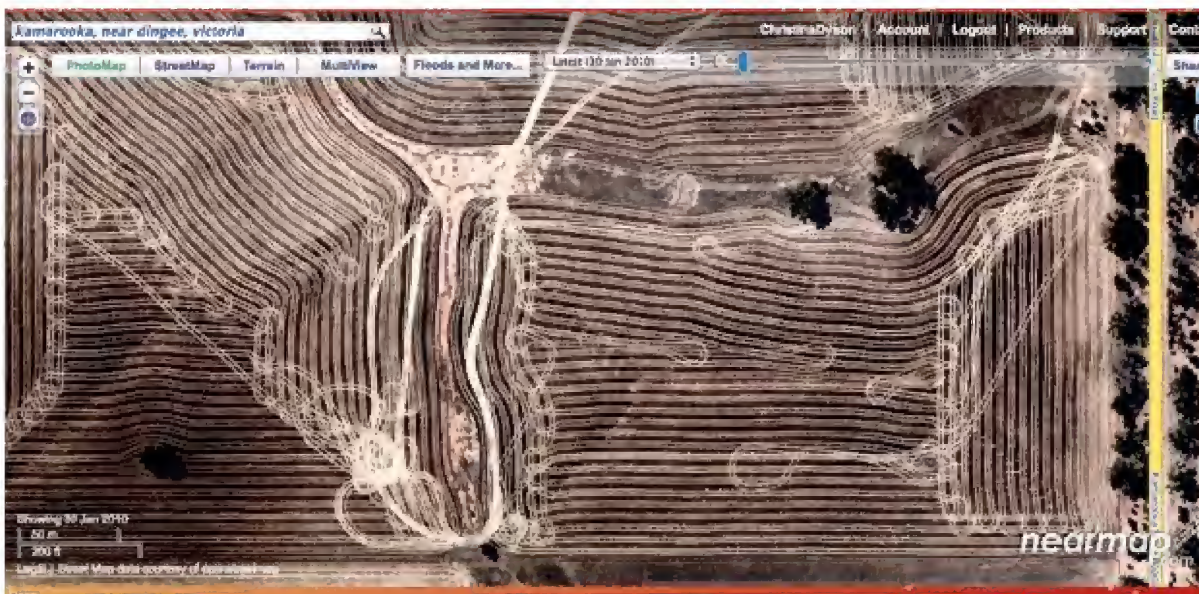
But first to the commercial transaction. NearMap operates principally on license fees derived from large-scale corporate and institutional users. It is highly likely that a local or state government body near you is using the company's services to track illegal vegetation clearance, unauthorised building activity, or monitor progress on a major infrastructure project. At the other end of the scale, registration of some basic details permits almost unlimited personal use. For uses in between, the company's website lists numerous categories and appropriate licensing conditions.

Unlike traditional aerial photography, which for many decades has relied on film-based photographs, this service is powered by digital imagery, seemingly flown at relatively low levels. This has many advantages. Firstly, by keying

the imagery into digital coordinates, it is possible to 'toggle' (or switch) between photography of different dates with chilling exactitude. It is not hard to see why corporate and institutional users would appreciate this form of surveillance. Secondly the digital imagery is far quicker to upload than film-based products, and so 'runs' are able to be processed within a relatively short time—aerial images of the recent Brisbane floods, for instance, were posted within days of the main peak being recorded. And thirdly, the clarity of the imagery is quite breathtaking. At each stage, it is possible to switch a mapping layer on or off at will, and to zoom in or out for a wider or closer view as the need arises.

For garden historians—and for those interested in rural landscapes, town and regional planning, urban infrastructure, geography, and a host of other disciplines—this service will be of immense value. Although NearMap has only been in operation for several years, already the amount of product is impressive. Coverage of the Australian continent, or at least its most populous parts, is very good; somewhat less so in some remote areas. For sketching site plans, analysing tree cover, discerning path layouts, checking for evidence of old property and other physical boundaries, appreciating vegetation between years of drought and plenty—all these and more are easily achieved. Try for yourself and look for your own home or garden—you'll possibly be quite shocked at the results and perhaps better informed when debate around the dinner table turns to electronic surveillance and the digital revolution.

Richard Aitken



Harvested paddocks on the Thunder Plains north of Bendigo, Vic., captured by NearMap in January 2010, towards the end of a long drought.

For the bookshelf

Land, survey, and title



These three books form a curious yet interlinked grouping and are perhaps best approached in reverse order—title, survey, and land. *Coming to Terms* charts the most contentious territory of the three. Eight authors offer different perspectives of Aboriginal Title in South Australia, after prefatory remarks by three Aboriginal Elders writing of ‘unfinished business’ and a foreword by Australian lawyer Geoffrey Robertson, who introduces the crucial evidence contained in SA’s 1836 Letters Patent that nothing contained therein ‘shall affect or be construed to affect the rights of any Aboriginal Natives of the said Province to the actual occupation or enjoyment in their own Persons or in the Persons of their Descendents of any Land therein now actually occupied or enjoyed by such Natives’. Although often couched in legal language, *Coming to Terms* can be easily followed by the non-legal reader keen to learn more of the struggle for recognition of Native Title. Throughout the text, and in several long appendices, considerable historical background is covered, essential for anyone wishing to gain a nuanced understanding of colonial land settlement and reconciliation with Australia’s Aboriginal peoples.

*essential for anyone wishing to
gain a nuanced understanding of
colonial land settlement*

For colonial surveyors, the business of colonial land settlement and reconciliation was a first-hand experience, and in his biography of Frederick D’Arcy, Andy Macqueen deals at length with the first, but is at pains to state that his subject left very little by way of record of his dealings with Aboriginal people. Working under Surveyor-General Mitchell in New South Wales from the late 1820s, D’Arcy was alternately in field and office, surveying and charting inhospitable terrain north and northwest of Sydney and later at Port Phillip. In 1838 D’Arcy left for Van Diemen’s Land under something of a cloud, circumstances that tell much about early colonial surveying and its diverse participating cast. Our protagonist fared little better as a contract surveyor and was back in Sydney by 1844, then in Queensland by 1859. Although a descendent, Macqueen casts his subject in a broad context. He also gives special note to D’Arcy’s artistic tendencies, a common attribute amongst colonial surveyors. Beautifully produced, the author and publisher deserve our thanks for adding to

the stock of knowledge about the processes and personalities of colonial land surveying.

The *Lands Guide* is a very different mode of publication, intended as a working guide to records of Crown land held by the Public Record Office Victoria. Abbreviated in style, yet comprehensive in scope, this is an indispensable aid to anyone contemplating research into the colonial Victorian landscape and one for which the painstaking authors deserve generous praise. Setting the scene is Bendigo-based historian Charles Fahey’s essay-length introduction entitled ‘Unlocking the Land’. There follows a massively detailed listing and guide to the myriad records which governed Crown land disposal in Victoria. Although specific to one colony/state, this guide will be read with interest more widely for the wealth of questions it asks and answers about the mechanisms of land survey, sale, occupation, and disposal.

So often we consider garden history in terms of the end product and its reception, yet as these three books suggest, a multitude of influences and attitudes have already shaped the designed landscape before it has even been gardened. In particular, links between colonial land surveying and garden design seem alive with promise for the dedicated researcher.

Richard Aitken

Shaun Berg (ed.), *Coming to Terms: Aboriginal Title in South Australia*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, SA, 2010 (ISBN 9781862548671): 592 pp, paperback, RRP \$39.95

Andy Macqueen, *Frederick Robert D’Arcy: colonial surveyor, explorer and artist, c. 1809-1875*, The Author, Wentworth Falls, NSW, 2010 (ISBN 9780646533599): 272 pp, hardback, RRP \$45 (available post free from the author at andymacqueen@gmail.com or PO Box 204, Wentworth Falls, NSW, 2782)

Phillippa Nelson & Lesley Alves, *Lands Guide: a guide to finding records of Crown land at Public Record Office Victoria*, Public Record Office Victoria in association with Gould Genealogy and History, Melbourne, 2009 (ISBN 9780975196877): 432 pp, paperback, RRP \$49.95 (also available in cd-rom and PDF formats via www.gould.com.au)

Patricia Sumerling, *The Adelaide Park Lands: a social history*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2011 (ISBN 9781862549142): 304 pp, hardback, RRP \$49.95

Arguably the Park Lands that surround the city of Adelaide are its greatest asset and have a long history of being the centre for numerous community activities from raucous Formula One car races to sedate croquet matches, as well as for private assignations and more scandalous and nefarious behaviour. Patricia Sumerling delivers a detailed text rich in facts, discoveries, and things we have almost collectively forgotten such as public executions and traditional Indigenous gatherings. As an historian of long-standing with a special interest in Adelaide she has amassed an impressive array of documentation and images about the life of the city dating from 1837 when William Light decided on the site and layout of the city, up to the present. Sumerling has organised her material under categorical headings such as 'Major events', 'The dark under-belly' and 'Cows only' within a two-part framework of public use, and planning and design. The book is well illustrated with many evocative and significant images. A very readable style makes the book accessible to a wide readership and the extensive scholarly indices and notes provide a comprehensive resource for researchers.

Trevor Nottle

Therese O'Malley, *Keywords in American Landscape Design*, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, in association with Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, & London, 2010 (ISBN 9780300101744): 736 pp, hardback, RRP US\$125

In this magisterial work, the author and her considerable team of contributors, researchers, and advisors, examine in detail 100 words or terms found in American garden making from the 17th to the mid-19th centuries. Useful essays tantalise the reader before coming to the alphabetical presentation of each keyword, summarised in brief prose and supported by historical images, examples of contemporary usage, and citations from contemporary gardening texts. Despite its considerable usefulness, seven pages per term seems excessive—even by American standards—and two pages each for three hundred or more keywords might have provided greater richness. The repetition of the same image in multiple places within the book also detracts rather than

enhances, and suggests that such an ambitious work might have been better served by a website, with the considerable funding lavished on this tome devoted to a truly comprehensive history of American gardening. Despite these small misgivings, *Keywords in American Landscape Design* remains a towering achievement.

Richard Aitken

Zachary J.S. Falck, *Weeds: an environmental history of metropolitan America*, University of Pittsburg Press, Pittsburgh, PA, 2010 (ISBN 9780822944058): 280 pp, hardback, RRP US\$40

Weeds and cities go together. Human habitations have always been accompanied by plants growing spontaneously on rubbish heaps, waste places, abandoned sites, vacant land, and roadsides. As a class they are called ruderals, from the Latin *rudus*, 'broken stone, rubbish, debris'. The expression includes plants volunteering on walls, pavements, drains, and gutters in urban ecologies.

He has striven to avoid the bias involved in calling plants 'weeds', preferring the rather awkward expression 'happenstance plants'

The author of this interesting study gives a novel perspective of the environmental history of American cities by attending to plants that have volunteered in and around them and the responses of writers and municipal authorities to such plants. He has striven to avoid the bias involved in calling plants 'weeds', preferring the rather awkward expression 'happenstance plants'. He seeks to use 'weed' only when reporting the words or attitudes of others. The war on weeds in American cities has been characterised by extravagant language used to demonise unwanted plants and the large scale use of herbicides, including the now notorious 2,4-D. Falck's fascinating, detailed case studies of court proceedings to compel residents to remove 'weeds' from their land remind us that the land of the free has been remarkably authoritarian in its pursuit of the ubiquitous American lawn. The book demonstrates that plant volunteers, whether introduced or indigenous, may make a valuable contribution to urban ecologies.

John Dwyer

John Dwyer is National Chair of the Australian Garden History Society. His doctoral thesis was entitled 'Weeds in Victorian landscapes'.

Recent releases



Catherine de Bourgoing et al, *Jardins Romantiques Français: du jardin des Lumières au parc romantique 1770–1840*, Musée de la Vie Romantique, Paris, 2011 (ISBN 9782759601592): 208pp, hardback, RRP €30

Published as the accompanying book to an excellent exhibition at the Museum of Romantic Life in Paris (worth a visit for the tea garden alone!), this beautifully produced book covers a period of intense interest for the history of early colonial gardening in Australia. Although others such as Wiebenson and Hunt have given broader accounts, this jewel-like book glistens with detail.

Alex S. George, *Australian Botanist's Companion*, Four Gables Press, Kardinya, WA, 2009 (ISBN 9780958034111): 672 pp, hardback, RRP \$77 (available from the author at a.george@murdoch.edu.au or 18 Barclay Road, Kardinya, WA, 6163—postage and packing within Australia \$13; overseas at cost)

Companions such as this are indispensable research tools, and in the editorial hands of such a meticulous botanist and environmental scholar as Alex George the product is first class. Adopting a thematic rather than alphabetical marshalling of information, garden historians will be delighted to see extensive biographical notes on many colonial plant collectors, gardeners, and horticulturists as well as a host of other facts and background information essential for researching and writing on Australian garden history. Highly recommended.

Philip Goad & Julie Willis (eds), *The Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 2012 (ISBN 9780521888578): 832 pp, hardback, RRP \$150

Alphabetically arranged, biographical and thematic in content, generous in its chronological coverage (especially of the last five decades), and truly national in scope, this book is significant for Australian garden historians not so much for the factual information it contains—which is substantial—as for its potential in future research into modernist and post-modernist designed landscapes and their creators.

Stephen J. Pyne, *Voice and Vision: a guide to writing history and other serious nonfiction*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England, 2011 (ISBN 9780674060425): 326 pp, paperback, RRP \$US19.95

Pyne's Australian fire history *Burning Bush* (1991) is one of many works he has published on fire histories of countries which share our high bushfire risk. In *Voice and Vision* Pyne guides prospective authors through the processes of writing such histories, with illuminating, enjoyable, and often virtuosic prose. This will be read with interest by aspiring researchers wishing to translate their analysis and ideas into engaging text. Curiously, images are treated as incidental rather than intrinsic to Pyne's methodology, a small lapse amid great inventiveness.

Tasmania's historic homes, the people who built them, and those who live in them now, are the subject of Alice Bennet and Georgia Warner's evocatively illustrated new book *Living in history*, published by Allen and Unwin.



Dialogue

Kevin Taylor (1953–2011)

The funeral of Kevin Taylor, tragically killed in a road in the Northern Territory, was held in Adelaide Town Hall on 18 August. Recognised for his outstanding contribution to Australian landscape architecture—innovative, responsive, and culturally sensitive—the legacy of his collaborative work, and that of his practice Taylor Cullity Lethlean, will continue to inspire. Also killed in the same accident were Greg McNamara and Lena Yali, the two Darwin-based directors of Troppo Architects, in all a shocking loss to the world of Australian environmental design.

Bernard Smith (1916–2011)

The grand old man of Australian art history has died in Melbourne aged 94. Best known for his books *Place, Taste, and Tradition* (1945) and *European Vision and the South Pacific* (1960), Bernard Smith's pioneering analysis linked art and ideas, assimilating European perspectives with Australasian landscapes.

The Old Mole and Australia's new gardening museum

At the recent AGHS Maryborough conference Richard Bird and Lynne Walker, custodians of a superb collection of antique, old, and quality garden tools, announced that they will be closing their business known as The Old Mole at the end of 2011. They have donated the tool collection to Carrick Hill Historic House and Garden in Adelaide where it will be the centrepiece of a new gardening museum. The gift includes trade catalogues and other garden-related ephemera.

Richard writes: 'We have enjoyed our 14 years building up the collection, looking for and finding artisans to create some of the items we sell and locating suppliers and manufacturers of the best quality implements we could source whilst doing our best to promote and use local crafts people. We have travelled widely and visited or attended many shows, fairs and conferences and have been able to visit many glorious gardens. We have enjoyed ourselves immensely, have learned a lot, and made many new friends and hopefully have been able to make many aware of the importance of preserving our heritage.'

The gardening museum will allow for the display, study, and teaching of Australian garden history. In thanking AGHS members for their support, Richard adds: 'Lynne and I are obviously very excited that the collection is to be part of this

project. Richard Heathcote at Carrick Hill is taking on an interesting and challenging venture with the setting up of a Gardening Museum Trust. To enable the collection to be housed, maintained and expanded we hope that you will be able to assist by donating either cash or any interesting historic gardening items. The Museum will be a first for Australia'.

OldMoleTools@bigpond.com

Australasian gardens and landscapes

From New Zealand, James Beattie sends a copy of the April–June 2011 issue of *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, a special number entitled 'Australasian Gardens and Landscapes' which he has guest edited with Katie Holmes of La Trobe University. The guest editors open with reflections on the journal's theme, presenting a reading of Australasian garden history, then eight contributors range across wide terrain from Aboriginal landscapes, farming landscapes, use of Australian plants, to transplantation of ideas (particularly from Asia).

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>

Historic Gardens of Perth exhibition

Ruth Morgan reports that the WA Branch exhibition has enjoyed very positive feedback. Over a thousand people attended and the Exhibition Committee is making enquiries about the possibility of producing a book emanating from the research and photographs collected. This would provide an important opportunity to expand on the interpretative text accompanying the exhibited images and to add extra gardens unable to be included in the exhibition.

Documenting garden plants

Members attending the recent AGHS Maryborough conference were delighted to meet Kyleigh Simpson and Dr Michael Simpson of Montville, Queensland, who have recently published *Australian Gardens Making History* (subtitled 'The vital role of making and keeping garden inventories'). In this 76-page publication, the authors chronicle the historic basis for the plants in their own garden, The Shambles, and exhort others to research and document the plants in their own gardens as a way of contributing to the historical record. *Australian Gardens Making History* is available from the authors (shambles@bigpond.net.au or 0458 429 524 or via their website www.montvillegarden.com).



A garden appreciation society or an active advocate for conservation?

I have been a member of the Australian Garden History Society for well over a decade now and am among the Society's youngest members. The Society's stated mission is highly commendable and should appeal to all generations: 'The Australian Garden History Society is the leader in concern for and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action'.

Clearly, the vision of the founders of the Society in the early 1980s was to protect threatened and vulnerable cultural landscapes and gardens by taking action. This is what the Society advocates as being its core business.

Since becoming a member of the Society, however, I've seen very little of this action. Perhaps it all took place in the early years when I was still at school. What I have seen is considerable resources and effort expended by committees at state and national level on organising garden visits for members. Of course, the appreciation of historic gardens is important and is probably the factor that gets most members involved in the Society in the first place. But it is not the core business of the Society to provide services akin to a specialised tour operator.

Where are the conferences on international trends in conservation of cultural landscapes and historic gardens, or on the effectiveness of local, state, and commonwealth legislation in protecting such places? Does the Society send representatives to forums discussing these topics? Does it invite members of local councils, heritage officers, town planners, university lecturers, and the like to its conferences?

Part of the garden and grounds of Lauderdale, in the Hobart suburb of New Town, photographed in 1996.



Do the Society's state and territory branches keep lists of vulnerable places so that they can quickly respond to any proposals for inappropriate development, based on the place's significant cultural and historic importance? Indeed, does the Society have its own working definition of 'significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens'?

The Society's national journal and branch newsletters should have at least a page or a couple of paragraphs dedicated to keeping members informed of its advocacy, demonstrating its 'committed, relevant and sustainable action'. Members, in turn, should be alerting committees of threatened or vulnerable places in their suburbs and districts.

The Society needs to refocus on its original stated mission. It has adequate funds and skills among its members to be the leader in conservation and protection of cultural landscapes and historic gardens. Recent letters to the Tasmanian Heritage Council from John Dwyer, Colleen Morris, Peter Watts, and Mike Evans in relation to the proposed development on land surrounding historic Lauderdale House in Hobart are a good indication that the Society can do it. With the prompt action of local member Warwick Oakman, who was able to provide supporting documentation (gathered over several years), the Tasmanian Heritage Council responded:

Please be assured that the Heritage Council shares your view on the importance of Lauderdale and its curtilage and gardens and we are doing everything within our power to ensure that the place is protected. Your support is extremely welcome and will assist us in our work.

Now that's more like it. It is the sort of action that will engage a wider audience and strengthen the Society's membership.

Mandy Stroebel, Hobart



AGHS News

Maryborough conference

The AGHS annual national conference held in Maryborough, Queensland, from 19–21 August 2011, was a great success, with 200 members attending—Peter Marquis-Kyle's report starts on page 30. Proceedings of the 2011 conference are to be published in a special edition of the *Queensland Review*, available in early 2012. Those interested can order these papers through Australian Academic Press by downloading the form from the AGHS website.

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

31st Annual General Meeting, Australian Garden History Society

The 31st Annual General Meeting of the Australian Garden History Society will be held on Saturday 22 October 2011 at 11.30am at the Turner Theatre, School of Botany, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria.

This year the Annual General Meeting will be held in conjunction with 'The Botany Behind Gardens' Forum at Melbourne University 10am–4pm. Members who wish to attend the AGM without attending the Forum are most welcome to do so.

Voting will be required at this AGM on a Special Resolution, set out in the Notice of Meeting in the enclosed Annual Report 2010–11. Each member is entitled to appoint another member as proxy. A proxy form is enclosed and must be received at the AGHS Office by 11.30am, 21 October 2011.

Explanatory Note to the Special Resolution: Rule 42 (5) of the AGHS Constitution currently requires that each Branch hold its AGM two months prior to the national AGM. Some Branches find it difficult in this timeframe to arrange for their accounts to be audited and set a suitable date. The purpose of the change to Rule 42 (5) is to give Branches more flexibility at the end of the financial year by reducing the time required between Branch AGMs and the national AGM from two months to one month.



Our Patron assisting in planting a Bunya Bunya pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*) at Dove Dale, to mark the occasion of the Society's visit on the optional day of the AGHS Annual National Conference, 22 August 2011.

The Botany Behind Gardens forum

Just a quick reminder that this informative and entertaining forum will be held at The University of Melbourne on 22 October 2011, coinciding with the AGM—see programme and booking form on the AGHS website (\$40 members; \$50 non-members). An optional trip to Royal Botanic Garden Cranbourne, with guided tour by one of its Australian Garden designers (Paul Thompson), will be held on 23 October (\$65/\$75). Make a weekend of it.

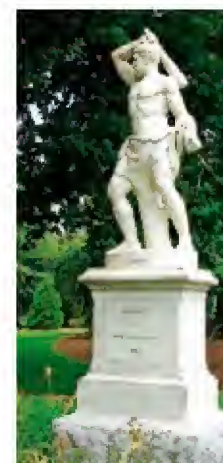
Save the date

The 33rd Australian Garden History Society's Annual National Conference, will be held in Ballarat, 9–11 November 2012. More information about the conference will be contained in future issues of *Australian Garden History*, in the lead up to the conference.

Gift ideas

The AGHS has recently produced a set of greeting cards to sit alongside its growing range of gift ideas. To purchase your sets contact the AGHS office (info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au).

Hercules at the Ballarat Botanic Gardens ready to welcome 2012 conference delegates.



Continued page 34

Conference report

Peter Marquis-Kyle

Each day we spent the morning in the theatre for presentations, and the afternoon visiting sites on foot or by bus. We visited private gardens, talked to their owners, saw them from a boat on the river—this tied in with Don Watson's paper about the architecture of timber houses.



AGHS annual national conference, Maryborough, Queensland, 19–21 August 2011

This was my first AGHS annual conference. I know Maryborough and its hinterland quite well, but going there with garden history aficionados showed it to me through a new frame of view.

I joined the pre-conference tour on the Tuesday in Brisbane guided by Sarah and Clive Lucas and Trisha Dixon Burkitt. Our coach took us up the Main Range to our base in Toowoomba, rolled out around the Darling Downs, skirted (at a distance) the damp rainforests of the Bunya Mountains and carried us into the Mary River catchment and on to Maryborough. Over the three days we visited a suburban villa garden in Toowoomba (Gabbinsbar), and seven rural homestead gardens (Woodlands, Harrow, Westbrook, Wylarah, Jimbour, Taabinga, Barambah). Clive Lucas had prepared excellent notes which I enjoyed reading before visiting each place, and Stuart Read gave impromptu show-and-tells about botanical specimens he collected on the way.

Everywhere we went, we heard stories about water—about the awful floods at the start of this year, and the dry times since. These intemperate conditions go with the sub-tropical territory, and explain why the best features of these places are not collections of delicate plants, but rather their native topography, their soils, their hardy old trees, their layouts, and their built structures. Typically, tall hoop and bunya pines landmark the homesteads, and I was delighted to see them again. I was pleased to hear, from the boffins on the bus,

the life stories and genealogy of some other plants, which I might otherwise not have seen.

On the Friday in Maryborough Elaine Brown opened the conference with a keynote address that gave us an historical context for viewing the local environment. She showed us Maryborough's beginnings as an informal trading village on the bank of the meandering Mary River in the 1840s, its relocation after early floods to a better site on higher ground; its development as a major port for timber, mining, and immigration; its sawmills, foundries, and shipyards; and its maturity as a regional centre. Boom times in the nineteenth century, followed by more gradual change during the twentieth, have left Maryborough with a pleasant nineteenth-century character in its landscape and its building stock.

The conference was held in the new Brolga Theatre that sits on the riverbank where a major sawmill used to be. Downstream from the venue is an area of fine old houses and gardens where we walked on the first afternoon of the conference. Upstream is the Queens Park, the main wharves and warehouses, and the slipways and factories beyond.

I won't review all of the papers presented over the three days but I will commend the organisers and presenters for the way the subjects of papers were integrated with the site visits. Jeannie Sim's talk about public gardens in Queensland set us up for Friday evening's cocktail party in Queens Park.



We rode in the open carriages of a tourist train, pulled by a replica of the steam loco built in Maryborough in the 1870s to haul timber to the sawmills, and traversed the bends of the river, the wharves, the town buildings, and the ship yards and factories.



As we mingled in the park, enjoying a breeze off the river at dusk, the Maryborough Excelsior Brass Band performed in the bandstand for us. Jane Lennon's paper on reading the cultural landscapes of Fraser Island would have been a great preparation for the people who took the tour there after the conference. I didn't go to Fraser Island, but I did join a post-conference tour on the Monday, to visit Boobyjan homestead. This station was first occupied by the Lawless family in 1847 and is still owned by their descendents. The large bottle tree *Brachychiton rupestris* near the creek below the house is reputed to have been planted by members of the Lawless family around 1860.

The whole conference, and the tours before and after, were full of interest and nicely paced.

Peter Marquis-Kyle is a conservation architect who lives in Brisbane. He was the co-author, with Meredith Walker, of *The Illustrated Burra Charter: good practice for heritage places*. He is currently a member of the Queensland Heritage Council.



One of the verandas at Brooklyn, the Rankin family house at Howard, the childhood home of Dame Anabelle Rankin.

Stuart Read and Joan and John Dwyer enjoyed running a tape measure around the substantial girth of the bottle tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*) at Boobyjan.



Mature trees, parts of the circular carriage drive, and lawn remain as the principal reminders of the originally more extensive garden of Oonooaba, built in c.1892 for James Stafford—a Maryborough solicitor and later mayor—by prominent Brisbane architect G.M.H. Addison.

All photos by Peter Marquis-Kyle

Profile: Kathy Wright

Kathy Wright's involvement with the Australian Garden History Society spans almost three decades. For the past six years she has been a committee member for the Victorian Branch and, since 2010, treasurer for the AGHS National Management Committee.

Do gardens feature prominently in your early memories? Yes, my grandparents on both sides were keen gardeners. My maternal grandfather was a terrific gardener. My paternal grandmother, who lived with us, was an enthusiastic gardener. I remember my grandfather's vegetable garden particularly the asparagus and the raspberries, neither of which were to be seen in the greengrocers of the 1940s in the isolated corner of Gippsland where I grew up. There was also the picking garden, which was wonderful. A maiden aunt, who lived in the same house as my grandfather, was responsible for organising the flowers for the house each day—preparing the vases, and spreading all the cut flowers over a large table in the laundry as she worked. They were like jewels to me. My grandfather would also take us into the orchard to pick apples. To be fair, my grandmother's garden in Gippsland had to survive on very little water (we only had tank water then), but there was probably decent soil and a favourable climate to help along a more conventional range of garden plants—a Cecile Brunner rose, philadelphus, chrysanthemums, viburnums, geraniums, cactus and succulents, and cypresses around the house.

Did these gardens and gardeners form the basis of your interest in gardens and garden history? To some extent, yes. My mother was also a very keen gardener. And I've always really enjoyed landscape. But it's only in my retirement though that I've been able to travel and experience gardens and landscapes in more far flung places, such as Iran, Greece, Portugal. I also credit my long-time friend, the late Lorrie Lawrence, for initially motivating me to join the Society—that was in the early eighties—and, later, to become more directly involved as part of the Victorian Branch committee then National Management Committee.

To give readers a sense of the sort of work branch committees do, could you describe some events and projects the Victorian Branch has been involved with recently? Recently we've been involved in quite a wide range of projects and activities. This has included support of publications, such as our joint support with the La Trobe Society of *La Trobe's Jolimont: a walk around my garden* (2006), by Helen Botham. Working bees have been held on a regular basis at Bishops court (led by Helen Page), and at the Abbotsford Convent (until 2010 led



by Pamela Jellie). Both of these gardens are fine examples of the way in which historic gardens can be restored and maintained. Other working bees lapsed for a couple of years but have since been restarted—by Fran Faul at Yallambie and Medlow. Our winter lecture series has proven a successful forum for presenting current research about garden and cultural landscape history. Day trips and tours have taken in a diverse range of historic gardens and cultural landscapes—including orchards, twentieth-century Australian plant gardens, rehabilitated natural landscapes, public parks and gardens, botanic gardens—and natural landscapes. The Branch has also produced a number of pamphlets documenting the history and remaining physical evidence of several significant historic Victorian gardens. The most recent of these was for the garden at Strathfieldsaye in Gippsland. Nina Crone (1934–2007) was the instigator of this work.

What about future directions for the Victorian Branch? We're interested in exploring interwar gardens and postwar suburban gardens of non-Anglo origin further. Perhaps too, we should be embracing the technology of the twenty-first century and explore putting lectures online, as podcasts, as a way of making these talks accessible to a wider audience. We'll also continue encouraging and assisting owners of significant historic gardens to document and record the important historic aspects of their properties. And we're always open to suggestions for new projects.

Diary dates

OCTOBER 2011

Tuesday 11

Nasmyth, Alva, and Mr Johnston

VICTORIA

Lecture by Richard Aitken on the Scottish garden Alva, one of the featured works in The Garden of Ideas. Explore a rich heritage of Scottish landscape painting and gardening and the role of the emigrant landscape gardener in shaping the Australian countryside. 10.15–11.45am, cost \$30, bookings essential through The Johnston Collection—tel: 03 9416 2515; email: info@johnstoncollection.org. Full details at www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au and www.johnstoncollection.org

Saturday 22

The Botany Behind Gardens forum

NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Turner Theatre, School of Botany, The University of Melbourne, 9.30–4.30: \$40 members, \$50 non-members (includes lectures, tour, morning tea, lunch, and drinks). Optional trip the following day (Sunday, 23) to Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, 9.00–4.00: \$65 members, \$75 non-members (includes travel, tour, morning tea, and lunch). Booking forms on AGHS website.

Sunday 23

Retford Park

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Morning tea at Retford Park, courtesy of James Fairfax, and a tour of the house and garden. For enquiries contact Lynette Esdaile, (02) 4887 7122 or garlynar@bigpond.com



Sunday 23

Manly foreshore

QUEENSLAND

View the tree planted in memory of Jan Seto followed by garden visits. Further details to be advised in the branch newsletter and AGHS website.

Sunday 30

Brown Garden, Glenunga

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A garden visit to the Brown garden at Glenunga. For further details check the AGHS website or contact Ray Choate (08) 8267 3106 or ray.choate@adelaide.edu.au

NOVEMBER 2011

Saturday 5 and Sunday 6

Berry gardens

SYDNEY & NORTHERN NSW and ACT/MONARO/RIVERINA

Self-drive weekend tour of gardens at Berry. A joint branch event. Costs (for both days): \$100 members, \$130 non-members. Boxed lunches and teas for both days are included but delegates need to make their own arrangements for accommodation, breakfast, and evening meals. Full instructions on where to meet and the complete program for the weekend will be forwarded on completion of registration. For bookings please contact Jeanne Villani via email Jeanne@Villani.com

Friday 11

Two gardens at Birch's Bay

TASMANIA

Visit to two private gardens set in this beautiful area south of Hobart. Enquiries to Rex Bean at rex.bean@bigpond.com

Sunday 13

Strathalbyn gardens

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Visit to Strathalbyn gardens. Strathalbyn is about one hour drive south east of Adelaide. BYO picnic lunch. For further details check the AGHS website or contact Ray Choate (08) 8267 3106 or ray.choate@adelaide.edu.au

Saturday 12–Friday 25

Historic Gardens of Perth exhibition reprise

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Coinciding with this year's City of Perth's Heritage Days (12–13 November) will be a reprise of the AGHS WA Branch's Historic Gardens of Perth exhibition. 9am–5pm, in the foyer of Council House. For information about opening hours and other Heritage Days events, visit <http://heritageperth.com.au/heritage-perth-heritage-days-2011>.

Sunday 27**End of year lunch****QUEENSLAND**

Our end of year event will be a lunch and garden visit at Woodlands, Marburg. Further details to be advised in the branch newsletter and AGHS website.

DECEMBER 2011

Sunday 4**Christmas party****SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Christmas party in the Joyner garden, Mannum. Use this opportunity to visit historic Mannum before the function. More information about historic Mannum will be in the next SA Branch newsletter. For further details check the AGHS website or contact Ray Choate (08) 8267 3106 or ray.choate@adelaide.edu.au

Sunday 4**Campbell Town: gardens and history****TASMANIA**

Travelling to Campbell Town by bus from Hobart, we'll visit the garden of historic Rosedale, have a BYO picnic or caf lunch in Campbell Town, and then visit another property in the afternoon. We're delighted historian Alex Green has agreed to accompany us and give a commentary en route. Enquiries to Ken Wright at m.anne.thwaites@gmail.com or Liz Kerry at liz.kerry@keypoint.com.au

To be advised**Quindalup Christmas party****SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS**

This year's Christmas party will be held at Quindalup. For updates and further details please check the AGHS website or contact Lynette Esdaile, (02) 4887 7122 or garlynar@bigpond.com

JANUARY 2012

Sunday 8**Celebrate the New Year in the Botanical Gardens****TASMANIA**

We'll meet for lunch, and afterwards there will be an opportunity to view a number of gifts made to the Gardens by the Tasmanian Branch of AGHS. Enquiries to Liz Kerry at liz.kerry@keypoint.com.au

FEBRUARY 2012

To be advised**Garden picnic, Farnborough, Moss Vale****SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS**

Summer afternoon garden picnic at Farnborough, Moss Vale. This event will be held in late February. For updates and further details please check the AGHS website or contact Lynette Esdaile, (02) 4887 7122 or garlynar@bigpond.com

AGHS News (continued)

AGHS advocacy

Proposed war memorials on Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra: The Australian Garden History Society has recently written to The Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities, expressing its deep concern about the impacts on Australia's cultural heritage of the First and Second World War memorials, proposed for Rond Terrace on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. The letter urged the Minister to protect and conserve aspects of Canberra's national and commonwealth significance by rejecting the proposal.

Inquiry into the administration of national memorials: That the WWI and WWII memorials proposal (noted above) progressed so far without proper regard for cultural heritage (in fact complete disregard) has highlighted several problems to do with the administration of memorials in Canberra generally. After much community agitation a parliamentary inquiry was launched to look into the process

of administering proposals for memorials in the national capital. The AGHS has made a submission to this inquiry, responding to the matters raised in the terms of reference.

For more information see the Lake War Memorials Forum website www.lakewarmemorialsforum.org

Edna Walling landscaped precinct, Mount Kembla: The AGHS has also recently written to the Heritage Council of New South Wales in support of the inclusion of the Edna Walling landscaped precinct, Mount Kembla, on the NSW Heritage Register. The precinct is significant for a number of reasons—aesthetically and historically for its association with Walling—as well as being a rare mid-20th century built precinct designed by professional women (Alison Norris designed the houses).

We await the outcomes of these three matters with great interest.

View from Kew

Tim Entwisle

It has been a bustling spring here in London. I arrived to gorgeous fields of bluebells, flowering at least three weeks earlier than usual, and you may have noticed we had a Royal wedding and a flower show or two.

I must make a brief botanical mention of the wedding. My invitation was clearly lost in the mail but along with the rest of the world my wife Lynda and I enjoyed the pomp and plants on television, with tea and scones. I understand there were four tons of foliage in Westminster Cathedral, mostly in the form of large field maples and hornbeams. The bouquet included myrtle, lily-of-the-valley, Sweet William (of course), and hyacinth.

Aside from the wedding, the spring talk was about bluebells—were they flowering early because of the pleasantly warm spring, the shockingly cold winter, or the creep of climate change? I was intrigued of course, given my advocacy for an early spring season ('sprinter') in Australia to better reflect the propensity for native and garden plants to start flowering en masse in July or August rather than waiting for the traditional European spring in September. I'll wait until I've enjoyed a few more springs in the UK before I pontificate on seasons here, and whether even at the source the system is a little shaky.

I was transported back home briefly with the opening of an Australian Garden outside the British Museum

As with the wedding, I enjoyed the Malvern Spring Gardening Show on BBC TV, a broadcaster that runs garden shows—as well as badger watching and snooker—regularly in prime time. Dry springs and the impact of climate change featured strongly, with a cacti and succulent floral display winning a Gold Medal and Best in Show.

I was transported back home briefly with the opening of an Australian Garden outside the British Museum, complementing a series of exhibitions inside. A sister garden, packed full of paper daisies, Brachyscome and sharply pruned eucalypts and banksias, was created here in Kew Gardens as part of the 'Travel the World with Kew' this summer. Both gardens feature the Wollemi Pine, in full cone.



Of course there was the Chelsea Flower Show, which I visited in person despite plenty of coverage on prime-time BBC TV. My impressions are gathered in an article I wrote for the August *Gardening Australia* magazine, but let me say it was colourful, at times curious, and slightly chaotic. That is, business as usual. It was great to see Dr Phil Moors and the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne winning gold for their Australian Garden, and to see my new home, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, in the show for the first time in a decade or so.

I say 'home' because I live and work at Kew Gardens, one of two estates run by the Royal Botanic Gardens. My new job has the unwieldy title of Director of Conservation, Living Collections and Estates. What this means is that I look after the horticulture and landscapes of Kew Gardens and the 'country' estate at Wakehurst Place, about an hour south of London, just past Gatwick airport.

My directorate also includes the Millenium Seed Bank, holding seed from over 10% of the world's plants and heading for 25% by 2020, plus making more and



Australian plants from the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew grace the forecourt of the British Museum as part of the Australia Landscape exhibition, on display until 16 October (catch it if you're quick!).

more seed available for restoration, local agriculture, and forestry. I look after the buildings and facilities on both estates and coordinate conservation programs across the organisation. All up I look after more than 400 of the 800 staff working at Kew—the rest are in the Herbarium, Jodrell scientific laboratories, public programs, and corporate support.

My first impressions of Kew? It's not dissimilar to the Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust in Sydney and Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, two organisations heavily influenced through their history by Kew and its staff. Kew is bigger in scope, budget, and staff, although recent austerity measures by government have meant that managing our own-earned revenue—half the income—is increasingly important and consuming. Big means more things can be done and a far bigger remit. My conservation focus is worldwide and Kew has the ability to lead

major international projects. Both Kew Gardens and Wakehurst Place have fresh Landscape Master Plans, which are exciting and ambitious. I want to put some thought into Kew Gardens in particular, building on the wonderful tree collection and glasshouse displays, creating horticultural landscapes that match the prestige and history of this amazing place.

So between visiting museums, gardens, and historic buildings, soaking up the sun and summer flowers, blogging and tweeting my plant stories, perhaps collecting an alga or two, I will have plenty to keep me happy and productive in London.

Tim Entwisle is Director of Conservation, Living Collections and Estates at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. His blog is talkingplants.blogspot.com and he can be followed on [@TimEntwisle](https://twitter.com/TimEntwisle) on Twitter.

Mission Statement

The Australian Garden History Society is the leader in concern for and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action.

